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The Russian Army

THE RUSSIAN ARMY

*ITS MEN, ITS LEADERS
and ITS BATTLES*

Walter Kerr

ALFRED A KNOPF: NEW YORK 1944



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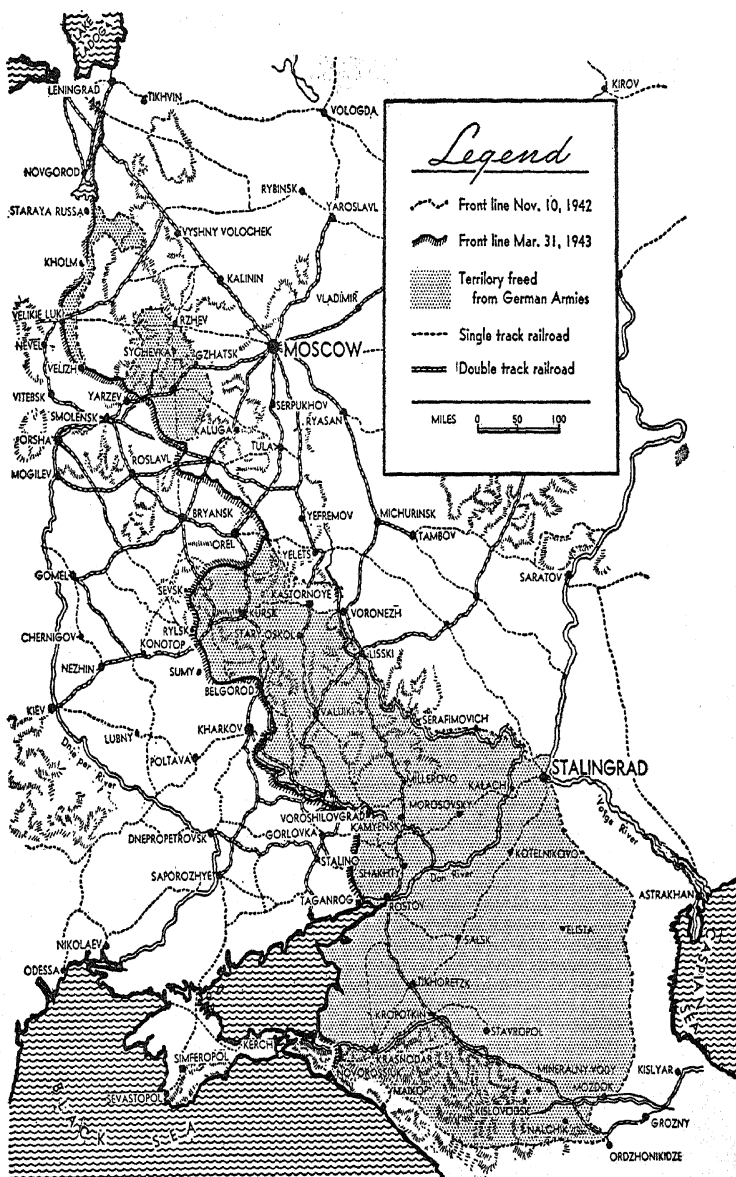
Table of Contents

CHAPTER	PAGE
1 The Army and Its Men	3
2 The Generals	16
3 The High Command	25
4 The Battle for Moscow — I	31
5 The Battle for Moscow — II	40
6 The Battle for Moscow — III	51
7 The Cavalry	79
8 The Infantry	92
9 "Death or Insanity"	104
10 "As Long as Fuel Lasts"	116
11 War in the Air	130
12 The Commissars	140
13 Two Russias	148
14 Occupied Russia	157
15 Back of the Red Army	172
16 The Battle for Stalingrad — I	182
17 The Battle for Stalingrad — II	191
18 The Battle for Stalingrad — III	205
19 The Battle for Stalingrad — IV	221
20 Allied Aid	227
21 Russia and Japan	237

Maps

	PAGE
<i>The Russian Front in the Spring of 1943</i>	1
<i>The Battle for Moscow — I</i>	32
<i>The Battle for Moscow — II</i>	41
<i>The Battle for Moscow — III</i>	52
<i>The Battle for Moscow — IV</i>	77
<i>The Battle for Stalingrad — I</i>	185
<i>The Battle for Stalingrad — II</i>	206
<i>The Battle for Stalingrad — III</i>	218

The Russian Army



THE RUSSIAN FRONT IN THE SPRING OF 1943

CHAPTER 1

The Army and Its Men

A YEAR ago last December while the Russian armies were driving the Germans from the outskirts of Moscow, I saw a column of sledges moving in single file along a forest road. The flanks of the horses were covered with a white frost and the drivers, muffled against the cold, were walking alongside in an effort to restore the circulation of blood to their feet.

It was early afternoon but though the sun was shining from a blue sky there was the dullness of dusk in the woods for there was snow on the branches of the fir trees and the trees grew close together. Scattered in this semi-darkness were little groups of weary men, their faces black with exhaustion, warming their hands before fires of green logs whose flames cast faint shadows on the snow.

The sledges were moving slowly to the west where guns were firing and men were fighting for their lives. They were taking bandages, splints, containers of blood for transfusions, frozen beef, bread, shells for 122-millimeter gun-howitzers, fodder for the cavalry and rifle ammunition for the infantry. The horses plodded and slipped along and the drivers walked in silence. When it is as cold as this, you do not feel like talking. You just keep going.

That was the Red Army as I first saw it. In the months to come, throughout the Battle for Moscow and later during the Battle for Stalingrad, I was going to see more of it. I was going to see its men on the training ground, at the opera and ballet in Moscow, dancing with their girls at the Red Army Club, taking a drink of vodka when they could get it, resting just behind the front or lying twisted and broken in death in a shallow trench that served as a common grave. I was going to learn that the strength of this army lay not only in its manpower and munitions but in the fighting heart of its soldiers, in the severity of its training, in iron discipline and in the support it received from a ruthless organization of the country's wealth and civilian strength. They were the factors that counted — fighting heart, training, discipline and support.

Otherwise I found the Red Army was much the same as other armies. There was nothing astonishing about its equipment. If it had fewer tanks than the German had, then it had more artillery. If its airplanes were not engineering marvels, it would fight in them anyway and at least they were adapted to Russian conditions. Nor did I find there was anything astonishing about the army's organization. But in a way that was remarkable in itself because it had not always been so.

The Czar's army cracked with the revolution of 1917 and the revolutionaries began to build on the ruins. But their army would be a peoples army. There would be no officers picked from an aristocracy. In fact there would be no officers at all, just comrades and leaders. And the soldiers would elect their own leaders. The salute reminded the men of the old days so that was abolished.

Epaulets reminded them of the old days. They were abolished. In the new army there would be no compulsory mobilization. The soldiers would volunteer for service.

It was a wonderful idea at the time but it took Lenin and his associates only a few weeks to learn that no army can be strong without discipline and there can be no discipline without authority. And so in that first year they abolished the system of electing commanders and they decreed compulsory mobilization. By the time war had come with Nazi Germany the salute was back and high-ranking officers were being called general or marshal. During the war the troops put on epaulets and their new uniforms resembled Czarist uniforms. The Red Army of 1941 and 1942 then was not the army that the revolutionary soldier of 1917 visualized in an ideal state. But Lenin was a realist. Stalin was a realist. The result was a highly efficient combat force, organized much the same as other armies throughout the world.

Nor in this new army did I find anything particularly remarkable about the commanding officers except possibly their youth, and that was easily explained.

Most generals were in their early forties for the simple reason that the older officers had been killed off or eliminated in the great purges of 1937 and 1938.

I found that the young generals applied the tested methods of modern warfare without recourse to trick tactics that can lead to trouble. Before Moscow, before Stalingrad and at the other places along the line they followed the classic principle of military science which is to concentrate more firepower than the enemy on the vital sector at the right time. When they forgot this

principle or when they were unable to apply it because of lack of equipment or deficiencies of transportation, they lost. When they followed it, they won.

It was not in organization that I found the real strength of the Red Army; nor did I find it solely in the youth of its generals, its manpower or munitions. I found its strength in the fighting heart of its soldiers, in their training, their discipline and the civilian strength behind them.

I wish you could have seen those men back in Moscow or at the front, men of medium height, stocky build, some with light hair and blue eyes, others dark, all with hard mouths, all in fine physical condition. They were not supermen. They were not fighting animals who cared little whether they lived or died. They wanted to live. They wanted to go home to their families. But they were not afraid to die.

I will tell you about one of them, a young friend of mine, and I think he is typical of them all.

When Germany invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, Gregor was twenty years old. He was studying to be a wireless operator and he lived in a one-room apartment in an old brick building with his father who was a blacksmith, his mother who worked at a textile factory and his sister who was studying at a technical school. A brother was a pilot in the air force. Three weeks after the war broke out Gregor was ordered to report to the military headquarters in his district. There he met men of all ages, many of whom he had known before. He lined up with the others and after three hours' waiting he was given a quick physical examination, accepted for service and told he would be leaving that afternoon to

join his unit. Things were turned upside down in the office that day. No lunch was served. About three o'clock he got his uniform. About five-thirty he was marching out of the building with about seventy other men, some of them factory workers like his father, others peasants from collective farms near Moscow. The peasant boys who had come in by bus and street car carried over their backs huge sacks of black bread and dried fish, some sacks weighing as much as seventy-five pounds. Like all Russians they could remember the days of famine, and like all peasants they would never forget.

So Gregor was on his way. The day before his salary was 550 rubles a month. Now it was 10.40 rubles a month and the second lieutenant who was in command of his contingent was making 600 rubles, the pay of the lowest rank of commissioned officer in the Red Army. That is a wide gap between the pay of a private and the pay of an officer, but Gregor like the others knew that an officer was a professional soldier and was paid the salary of a skilled worker while the rank and file had been called up to fight for their country and not for money. He would not need much money anyway because his mother and father were working, and he had almost no expenses of his own.

I can imagine what Gregor and his friends looked like that evening as they marched to the station. I was not in Moscow at the time but I saw many other groups like this one. They probably walked quietly along, out of step, the city workers kidding the peasants because of the food they were carrying and the peasants talking to each other as if to say that when it comes right down to it you really cannot trust a city slicker.

Since the Red Army is much like other armies Gregor and the others waited at the station for hours before their train was ready to go. It was a box car with a stove in it, nothing fancy but it would get them where they were ordered to go. The following morning they got out at a small town, had breakfast at the station and walked about two miles to their training ground.

Gregor looked around him and saw that the barracks were clean. He would soon find out that it was up to him to keep them clean. Everyone wore summer uniforms, the black boots, khaki breeches, loose-fitting shirt, wide leather belt and overseas cap. Everyone had a rifle regardless of the job to which he was assigned. Gregor went into a communications detachment of the new division, and the morning after his arrival the training began in earnest. It was not easy going. It was hard work every day all day and the recruits soon learned that the Red Army followed the maxim laid down by Alexander Suvorov, the famous general of Catherine the Great's time — "Hard on the training ground, easy on the battlefield."

The men got up at six o'clock every morning. After short setting-up exercises they washed and went to breakfast at seven. The meal usually consisted of a hot dish of "kasha," which is barley, and cold meat or cold fish, tea and a little less than an ounce of sugar. The bread ration was 800 grams a day or a bit under two pounds, enough for any man. At eight o'clock the division began four hours of infantry training in the field. It was tiring work in the beginning particularly for the men from the city because in July and August a hot sun beats down on central Russia. At noon the men were

given an hour's theoretical instruction in the use of the rifle, machine gun, grenade or whatever their specialty was.

At one o'clock, they sat down to a meal of hot cabbage soup, kasha again, hot meat, bread and tea. The afternoon program varied. On one day the division would go out on a three-hour hike. On another the time would be devoted to field training in the individual's specialty. About one afternoon a week there would be blackboard instruction or political education which consisted of talks about the enemy, stories of how the Germans were laying waste the countryside, lectures on discipline and respect for authority. The five-o'clock supper often was kasha again, fish, tea, bread and once in a great while jam.

In the evening there was collective reading of the Moscow newspapers with the political commissar doing the talking. He would always read the editorials, sometimes one or two military articles from the newspaper, "Red Star," occasionally something from the foreign page. Every once in a while the men would be marched to the theatre to see a film or play or to the division's clubhouse for a concert put on by a troupe of visiting artists from the capital. Every tenth day the men were marched to a public bathhouse after which they were given clean clothing. Lights out at ten o'clock found the division ready to go to bed. No man had had any time to himself except perhaps a half hour in which he was supposed to write a letter home or take care of his equipment or study.

In this army Gregor saw discipline as perhaps no soldier in the American Army understands it. There was,

of course, the same unquestioning obedience to orders, but some of the penalties for violation of a regulation were frightening. An officer could be broken and given an eight-year suspended jail sentence for overstaying his leave. He would be sent to the front as a private and if he acquitted himself well that sentence would be quashed after the war. Similarly, a man could be shot for an offense that in this country would lead only to the guardhouse. This may be questioned by some friends of the Soviet Union, but I want to point out again that Stalin is a realist. In those days his country's back was to the wall. There could be no compromise with indecision or complacency. There was none.

My friend did not like this discipline any more than any man in any army likes discipline, but I think he was better trained to meet it than most Americans would be. Ever since he could remember life in the Soviet Union had been a struggle — a struggle to achieve the first five-year plan, a struggle to achieve the second, a struggle all the time to make the Soviet Union strong enough in twenty-five years so that it could withstand an assault such as was launched by Adolf Hitler's mechanized state. At school and later when he went to work he had been taught discipline. The transition from labor discipline to military discipline was no great shock.

Gregor took it as he had to take it and he turned out to be a good soldier as the wound stripes on the right side of his tunic show today. He told me the morale in his division grew rapidly from the early days. At first the men wanted to fight but they knew they did not quite know how to fight. Some had been trained before. Others were green. Gradually they put on weight and

their muscles hardened. Day after day they heard that the Germans were pushing towards Moscow. They knew their friends at the front were fighting as best they could. They knew that those friends needed help. And it was not long before they felt they were the men to give that help. In came the stories of further withdrawals. In came stories of individual heroism at the front, of pilots ramming enemy planes after their ammunition was gone, of squads of men holding off tank attacks with grenades, of partisans fighting behind the lines, destroying German communications. They wanted to go too.

Gregor said that in those weeks the men could take the training and discipline all right. What they disliked and openly talked about was that they could not stand being kept in the rear when they felt they were ready for the front. The Germans took Minsk, Smolensk, Mozhaïsk and pressed on towards the capital. To the outside world it looked as if nothing could stop them. But Gregor and his friends began to feel that they could stop the Germans alone.

Finally, in mid-November this division along with many others got its orders. The regiments boarded trains that night and before morning they were encamped near Moscow ready to take part in the great counter-offensive. For several weeks then Gregor could hear the guns coming closer and closer. He knew the Russians were being beaten back, just as Stalin knew it and just as the front commander, Army General Georgi Zhukov, knew it. Neither Gregor nor his friends could understand why the division was not sent into the battleline. But Stalin knew and Zhukov knew. They were waiting for the right time. Then early on the morning of December 6, when

the snow lay deep on the ground and the exhausted Russians on the line began to wonder if help was ever going to come, the order came for the reserve divisions to begin the great counter-offensive. That counter-offensive, though the world may not have realized it at the time, was the beginning of the end for the German Army, for the Nazi party and for Adolf Hitler. The Germans were rolled back.

After the battle that lasted well into February, Gregor, now an experienced soldier, was transferred to the South Front and moved into the line below Kharkov. He was wounded. After two months in a hospital he was sent to another division operating on the Rzhev sector west of Moscow. In August he was wounded again and this time he was in a hospital for three months.

That is when I first met him. One evening he stopped me on the street and asked me for a light. He had made his cigarette with loose tobacco and a strip of newspaper. He asked me about America and the war and we talked there for about twenty minutes. The next night he came up to my hotel room bringing with him a couple of friends and we talked of the possibilities of a second front. It was clear from our talk that the commissars who had talked to him had never discussed the military difficulties. But he listened politely if skeptically. In early December Gregor went to the Voronezh Front. In January of this year he was sent with his division to take part in that phase of the Soviet counter-offensive led by Colonel General Filip Golikov, but again he was wounded though this time only slightly and he was given a leave of absence to visit his family in Moscow. That is where I saw him for the second time in

February. He told me he had just been offered a job in a headquarters in Moscow but that he had refused and asked to be allowed to return to the front. His brother he had learned was killed last September. Several days before I left Moscow in April this boy was wearing a corporal's epaulets. His salary had been raised from 10.40 rubles a month to 130.

At the front he told me the men have no regular hours. They fight when they have to, and train, eat and sleep when they have time. When fighting conditions permitted, he said, the food was good and plentiful.

If the Red Army had changed a great deal in the twenty-five years since it was organized, it had changed considerably in the twenty-one months that Gregor was in it. In January he had seen an order that twenty years ago, ten years ago or even five years ago would have been considered heresy by any good bolshevik. It was designed to improve the manners and appearance of the troops as well as to increase their discipline, though neither Gregor nor I nor any other observer I talked to ever thought there was anything wrong with them before.

But the order said that officers and men were forbidden to appear in theatres, cinemas or other public places in unpressed uniforms, with unpolished buttons, in felt boots, in felt capes or "burkas" as they are called, in fur vests, in padded or quilted pants, unshaved or with hair uncombed. In the future they were forbidden to carry heavy bundles in public places or on the streets, except at railroad stations. Small neatly packed bundles were allowed but only if carried in the left hand (to keep the right hand free for salute). Uniforms could not be

worn in public markets or bazaars. Officers and men were required to ride inside street cars and buses. They were not allowed to hang on to the outside step, an old Moscow custom because the transportation system is not equal to the demand. They had to enter street cars by the rear door, and once inside no officer or soldier could remain seated in the presence of a man of higher rank.

I do not think this order proves very much but it does illustrate the change that has come over the Red Army in twenty-five years, a change from no discipline to iron discipline.

The final important thing that impressed me about this army was the support it received from the civilian population. It got it because it had to get it to survive. If the Red Army was going to be able to withstand the Nazi war machine, everything had to be subordinated to the needs of the army. The manufacture of all consumer goods had to be stopped. Food had to be rigidly rationed and kept at a minimum consistent with the basic requirements of physical endurance. No matter if thousands of white-collar workers in Moscow lost from twenty to twenty-five pounds apiece in weight. As long as they got enough food to keep going they were getting enough. No matter if older men and women, whose age and physical condition prevented them from working, had to get along at times on little more than bread and occasional thin soups.

In a city like Moscow the food supply of necessity depends on the transport system for the bulk of the food is grown hundreds of miles away. But in wartime the railroads and the trucks were needed for the army. They could only be used to supply civilians after they had sup-

plied the army. And so coal for civilian use stopped the first winter of the war. No more clothing was produced. Shoes had to be made to last. Young women with perhaps three or four dresses in their closets changed with their friends so that they would not have to wear the same ones all the time.

The Russians did not want it that way and they did not plan it that way. But it had to be that way if they were to survive, and they knew it. It would not be fair to say that no one grumbled. Many did, especially white-collar workers who could not understand and never did understand why they were not entitled to as much food as a factory worker. But there was not enough for everybody and the Soviets distributed it as they thought they had to. Where conditions warranted, things worked out rather well. Life was terribly hard the first winter in Moscow and horrible that first winter in Leningrad. But conditions improved during the second winter, partly because of improved positions at the front and partly because of more able organization. The mistakes of the first winter were not repeated. In Moscow the need to save fuel prompted a decree that no apartments should be heated at all. The result was that the pipes broke and the damage was difficult to repair. A year later the decree authorized just enough heat to keep the pipes from breaking. So the Soviets learned, the hard way.

Still, all the sacrifices the people made were not in vain. They contributed to the army's strength just as the morale of the soldiers, their training and discipline did. And without them all, the Red Army could not have held its ground, despite the excellence of its equipment and the numbers of its men.

CHAPTER 2

The Generals

THE RUSSIANS had just captured the town of Kotelnikovo on the railroad 110 miles southwest of Stalingrad. It was the end of December of 1942 and there was light snow on the ground. Hard-faced guards were standing before many of the one-story frame houses and we knew that on the inside were German and Rumanian prisoners waiting for transport across the open steppes to distant Siberia. We walked until we came to a large park.

"Why, the Germans have turned it into a cemetery," someone said, pointing to the rows of double crosses.

"Let's take a look," said the colonel who was showing us the town.

So we crossed the street, picking our way through scattered rubble and broken brick from destroyed buildings near by. The first graves we saw were laid out carefully. Around each one there was a neat border of brick and at the head was a wooden cross on which had been burned the soldier's name, his day of birth, his day of death, his rank and the number of his regiment. Here were buried men who had died in October and early November.

We walked further on toward the center of the park

and there we found the graves of men who had fallen at the end of November and in early December.

There were no neat borders of brick for them, just hastily prepared crosses, for when they were buried the Russians were pushing on the town. The time was short.

And then we walked to the far side of the park where there were four gaping holes in the hard ground with piles of earth close by and two discarded shovels barely visible through the snow. At the bottom of each hole lay a German soldier, his head, hands and feet bare, his clothing removed except for a suit of heavy underwear. No border of brick for him. No wooden cross. We felt as we stood there that we could almost hear one of the gravediggers screaming to the other.

"Throw away that shovel. They're coming. Can't you hear that machine-gun fire? Let's get out of here."

They were coming all right. They were troops commanded by forty-four-year-old Lieutenant General Rodion Malinovsky, who by the capture of Kotelnikovo ended any hopes Hitler might have had of rescuing his trapped Sixth Army at Stalingrad. For winning this battle Malinovsky was promoted to the rank of colonel general and elevated from the command of an army to the command of a front, the South Front.

The Red Army is so organized that beneath the Headquarters of the Supreme Command are a number of front commanders, and each front commander may direct the operations of two, three, four, five, six or seven armies, depending upon the length of his battle line and the importance of his sector.

Generally speaking, a colonel general commands a front, a lieutenant general commands an army and a

major general commands a division. There is an astonishing similarity about most of these high commanding officers. They are all members of the Communist Party and have been for many years, although throughout the country only about one person in sixty carries a party card. If you are not a member of the party, you have got about as much chance of becoming a senior officer in the Red Army as a member of the Communist Party in America has of becoming a general in the American Army. And for the same reason. I think this is worth remembering because it seems to ruin the argument of men who say that some day the "generals" will turn against the party. The "generals" are the party just as much as the peoples commissars are the party.

Another thing about these generals is that to me they all look alike. They are all about five feet seven inches tall, all of stocky build, all loyal to Stalin, all polite, all easy-going, authoritative, sometimes curt, always disciplinarians. No private, captain or colonel walks up to one of them and calls him comrade. But he stands at attention until the front commander notices him; then he salutes, reports to the "comrade general," gets his orders, salutes and walks out again.

You will find that the careers of these front commanders are much the same. They are all the sons of factory workers or peasants. They were privates or corporals in the Czar's army. They "voted with their feet" when the revolution came, by joining the mass desertions from the army.

Some immediately joined the Red Guards which were the detachments of armed workers that really won the revolution for the bolsheviks, the men who fought

the regiments that remained loyal to the Czar. Others joined guerrilla detachments, or as the Russians call them, "the partisans," the groups that continued to fight against the Germans or battled with the Whites. Within a few months, however, they were all in the newly-formed Red Army and so today they wear medals on their chests, showing that they have been in the army since it was organized early in 1918. Many like Zhukov moved from the Red Guards into divisions where they served as privates or corporals. Others like Timoshenko switched from partisan detachments into the command of divisions. But though they were all excellent fighters only a few had had high military training. Consequently, after the civil war, because they were communists and good soldiers, they all went to military schools and were graduated with commissions. Then came service with troops followed by further study at the Frunze Military Academy where they learned how to handle large formations of men.

A correspondent in Moscow runs into trouble just as soon as he tries to find out much more about any one of these generals. Biographical material on Timoshenko and Budenny and Voroshilov was easy enough for they were marshals and the marshals had been publicized in peacetime. But the new men, officers like Zhukov, Rokossovsky and Golikov, presented plenty of problems.

The Red Army is just as hard a wall to penetrate as the Communist Party and that is saying a good deal. Routine information that in many countries is so harmless that it is published in the daily press is considered a military secret in the Soviet Union. It took me eighteen months in Moscow to learn that Zhukov was married

and that his home was in the capital. I heard about such things in a roundabout way. Zhukov had a little son and by chance one day I found myself talking to one of the boy's school friends. He had stopped me in the street to ask me if he could look at my wrist watch.

"'Zhuk' says we are killing thousands of Germans," the friend told me.

"Who is 'Zhuk'?" I asked.

"He is Zhukov's son," the boy replied, "but he doesn't like the name 'Zhuk.' "

I could guess why, "Zhuk" means "beetle" in Russian.

My friend told me that he had been to Zhukov's house.

"He lives the other side of Arbat Square," he said, and he went on to say that the Zhukov family occupied the upper floor of a two-family house, with a colonel of police forces living on the ground floor. Zhukov, he said, had two sons and a daughter and his wife is "taller than he is."

Well, that is how you find out little things in Moscow. But occasionally the correspondents had an opportunity to talk to a front commander. Our longest talk and the most interesting was with General Malinovsky.

I know that Russian names are hard to remember, but I would like you to remember Malinovsky. He is a colorful character: We saw him in a little wooden schoolhouse in a Cossack village not far from the River Don. It was much like the "Little Red Schoolhouse" of early America. We were sitting at the little desks, trying to find some place to put our legs, when Malinovsky came striding into the room, five feet seven inches tall, heavy set, with an amused expression on his face. He sat down,

placed his hands palm down on one of the desks and looked around.

"It's not bad weather," he said, "It's good for war."

Later he told us he was a corporal and a machine-gunner in the last war, that he had served with a Russian brigade in France and that his unit was in a sector close to an American division. His brigade was one of two that the Czar formed near Moscow in 1915 and sent to France early in the following year by way of Siberia, Singapore, the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean. France had asked for help. The Czar was sending what little he could spare.

"The French girls were astonished to see us," the General said. "They expected us to have long beards."

In France his brigade ran into French, British, Belgian and American troops.

"In spirit," he said, "the Russians and the Americans got along together better than any two nationalities — especially when it came to having a drink or smashing glasses in a cafe."

But in March of 1917 came the first of the two revolutions that was to end with the bolsheviks in control the following November. There was unrest in the Czar's army and the news spread to the Russian brigades in France. Corporal Malinovsky, then eighteen years old, joined the revolutionaries. They laid down their arms and refused to fight.

"Our camp," he recalled, "was encircled by allied troops. The French tried to pacify us by artillery fire."

But in the end the allies gave in and the brigades were broken up. Some Russians stayed in France. Some went to North Africa. Malinovsky headed for home to take

part in the revolt. He landed in Siberia and soon joined one of the Red rifle divisions that was fighting the Whites under Admiral Kolchak. The revolution was in full swing. During this war he married a Siberian girl. She and their two sons now reside in Irkutsk.

As he talked, Malinovsky sat there with his palms down on the top of the school desk. His black astrakhan hat with its red-and-gold crown of a general's rank was beside him on the bench, but he kept on his overcoat. I noticed that his thick black hair brushed straight back was tinged with gray. His round full face looked a little tired.

He became an officer during the civil war, he said, and later went back to Odessa on the Black Sea coast. Soon he was back in the army, attending military school, studying, serving with troops and studying again. When this war broke out he was a major general and as commander of the Soviet Sixth Army he delayed Colonel General Paul von Kleist's tank army for a long time on the banks of the lower Dneiper. For this he received the order of Lenin.

After talking to us about his army and telling us some of the history of the Stalingrad battle, we went into another room of the schoolhouse to be the General's guests at luncheon. What a luncheon! It began with the General seizing a large carafe of vodka. Eddy Gilmore, of the Associated Press, was sitting next to me. First the General filled Eddy's glass to the brim. It was a standard size water glass. Then he filled mine and his own. Finally, he proposed a toast. I cannot remember what it was. I recall that Stalin's name was mentioned two or

three times. The trouble was that he insisted we drain our glasses at a gulp. He downed his. While Eddy and I were trying to recover the use of our vocal chords, the General got up again and walked over to Robert Magidoff, of the National Broadcasting Company. Robert was our interpreter, and an excellent one. He filled Robert's glass. Then he filled Eddy's glass again and mine and his own. Another toast and again the glasses were drained.

By this time it was clear that one of us was expected to respond to the toasts, but we were getting nervous about those full glasses of vodka. In the end I think it was Paul Holt, of the London Daily Express, a little man with an extraordinary capacity for vodka, who got to his feet. His toast was to the Red Army, but the General was on his feet with an amendment.

"Yes," he said, "and to Stalin who organized the Red Army and who is leading it to victory."

For the rest of the afternoon whenever one of us had sufficient courage to propose a toast, the General was up with an amendment that included Stalin's name. I do not think he ever missed. Eddy Gilmore whispered to me that this general would go far.

Late in the afternoon when the correspondents were just about beaten the General made a speech. He spoke softly and soberly, and his last words were: "I apologize, comrades, that I have to leave you now. I must return to my duties, to the troops under my command."

General Malinovsky, I think, is a typical Russian front commander, and the front commanders in the Red Army are Russia's best field officers. The sectors they

command vary from fifty to two hundred and fifty miles in width. In the early part of the war they were much wider, and the entire battle line was divided into only three fronts. After the reorganization of the High Command that took place in the fall of 1942 there were fourteen fronts.

CHAPTER 3

The High Command

HIGH above my young friend Gregor, the Red Army corporal, and high above General Malinovsky, the front commander, is the Supreme General Headquarters of the Red Army, which itself is subordinate to the country's political leadership. There have been changes in the army command during the war but political leadership is still in the hands of the fourteen-man Political Bureau of the Communist Party, and no man has risen in stature to the extent that he can rival in importance any one of the fourteen. In fact, not only has the army failed to move in on the political leadership but the political leadership has moved in on the army. At the start of the war only one of the fourteen, Voroshilov, held military rank. Now five of them are entitled to wear uniform.

The members of this Politburo are:

Stalin, who since the war has become Supreme Commander-in-Chief and a Marshal of the Soviet Union. He is also chairman of the Council of Peoples Commissars, Peoples Commissar of Defense and chairman of the State Defense Committee.

Viacheslav M. Molotov, the Peoples Commissar of Foreign Affairs, also a member of the State Defense Committee.

Klimenti E. Voroshilov, a Marshal of the Soviet Union and a member of the State Defense Committee.

Lazar M. Kaganovich, the Peoples Commissar of Railways who became organizer of civilian defense of the Caucasus when the Germans were marching on Russian oil in 1942, member of the State Defense Committee.

Mikhail I. Kalinin, president of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet, a rather unimportant job the way the Soviet Union is organized though it corresponds in a general way to the title of chief of state.

Andrey A. Andreyev, chairman of the Council of the Union, one of the two branches of the Supreme Soviet or Congress.

Nikitin S. Khrushchev, first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party, who served as the political member of several military councils and was given the rank of lieutenant general.

A. A. Zhdanov, the jovial heavy-set man who is called "organizer of the defense of Leningrad," secretary of the Leningrad City Committee of the Communist Party, recently given the rank of lieutenant general.

Anastas I. Mikoyan, the Peoples Commissar for Foreign Trade and member of the State Defense Committee.

And five candidate members:

Lavrenti P. Beria, the Georgian who is Peoples Commissar of Internal Affairs or more specifically head of all police forces, also a member of the State Defense Committee.

Nikolai M. Shvernik, chairman of the Council of Nationalities, the second of the two branches of the Su-

preme Soviet, and chairman of the All-Union Council of Trade Unions.

G. M. Malenkov, who formerly was Stalin's secretary, now a member of the State Defense Committee, a man to be watched.

Nikolai A. Voznesensky, one of the youngest members of the State Defense Committee along with Malenkov, reported to be extremely brilliant, chairman of the State Planning Commission.

And Alexander S. Shcherbakov, an assistant Peoples Commissar of Defense, director of the Soviet Information Bureau, leader of all Moscow communists, chief of the political department of the Red Army, recently named a lieutenant general.

It will be seen then that eight of these fourteen men constitute the State Defense Committee, the organization that runs the Soviet Union in wartime, and that five of them hold high positions in the army, Stalin, Voroshilov, Khrushchev, Zhdanov and Shcherbakov.

Command of the army has not been as stable as political leadership. At the start of the war there were five Marshals of the Soviet Union: Voroshilov, Semeon Konstantinovich Timoshenko, Semeon M. Budenny, Boris M. Shaposhnikov and Gregory Kulik. In the early months when the Nazis were driving on Moscow Voroshilov commanded the northern group of armies, Timoshenko the central forces and the cavalryman Budenny led the southern group. They were the old Bolshevik fighters, the darlings of the Kremlin where Stalin worked and lived behind high brick walls, and good soldiers. But it did not take Stalin long to realize that something was wrong somewhere. Voroshilov and

Budenny were relieved of their commands and assigned to train reserves. Timoshenko was transferred from the central to the southern front.

In came an officer who was not a marshal, a younger man but an experienced soldier, an officer whose name was rarely heard in the Soviet Union before the war. He was Georgi Konstantinovich Zhukov, forty-eight years old, peasant-born, once a private in the Czar's army, first a private then a corporal in a cavalry division of the Red Army during the civil war. Probably no man was a better student of modern warfare than he was, and Stalin knew it. After the civil war he had commanded a regiment, then a brigade, then a division of cavalry. He had served as assistant inspector general of cavalry when Budenny was inspector general. For five years he had commanded the 4th Cavalry Division and in 1938 he had become first commander of a special cavalry corps stationed near the frontier in the White Russian Military Region, close to Poland.

But trouble was brewing with the Japanese in the Far East, Zhukov was sent to Siberia and in August of 1939 he led the Soviet forces that surrounded and destroyed the Japanese Sixth Army at Khalkin-Gol on the frontier of Outer Mongolia and Manchukuo. This was only a few weeks before Germany invaded Poland, so starting the second world war. The world therefore paid little attention to Zhukov and little more to the campaign he had won, though out there in the Far East he had become the first officer to command large tank forces and use them the way they should be used. I think he was the first man to wage "lightning war" or blitzkrieg.

It is interesting that it was the Japanese Sixth Army

that Zhukov destroyed. Later he was to be in command when the German Sixth Army was to be annihilated at Stalingrad.

Anyway, when Timoshenko was transferred to the southern front in the fourth month of the war, Stalin entrusted the central front to General Zhukov and defense of the central front meant the defense of Moscow. This appointment marked the first change in leadership in the Red Army. Zhukov won his battle and Moscow was saved, but in the following summer (1942) the Germans concentrated their striking power on the southern front. Again Timoshenko had to bear the brunt of the German advance. He handled his forces well. He pulled them back, protected his flanks, organized his rear. But in early August he was close to the Don while on the central front Zhukov was attacking. Stalin again called on Zhukov and sent him to relieve Timoshenko who in his turn was sent to the northwest to command a narrower front sector. This new appointment marked the second important change in Red Army leadership.

At the same time Stalin was taking a more active part in military affairs. A new organization was formed to lead the Red Army. It was called the Headquarters of the Supreme Command and Stalin himself took over the post as supreme commander-in-chief. This new headquarters reorganized the line. It broke up the large fronts, and in the newly created sectors it put younger men in command, officers like Colonel General Leonid Govorov, Colonel General Konstantin Rokossovsky and Colonel General Golikov.

To coordinate these sectors, which were still called

"fronts," Headquarters sent men like Zhukov and Alexander Vasilievsky, who later was to replace Shaposhnikov as chief of the general staff when Shaposhnikov was to retire because of ill health. Again Zhukov won his battle, and with the great counter-offensive that began at Stalingrad and ended at Kharkov more than 350 miles away, the younger "front" commanders also proved their worth. So Zhukov became a Marshal of the Soviet Union, the first to be named in wartime. Soon after this promotion, General Vasilievsky, who in November of 1942 had succeeded Shaposhnikov, became a Marshal of the Soviet Union. Then Stalin himself took the same rank. Now these three are the outstanding leaders of the Red Army and they are assisted by an able group of young men, soldiers like the artilleryman Nikolai Voronov, only thirty-eight years old, who is chief of all artillery, and young Alexander Novikov, now chief of the Red Air Force. Voronov is the first officer to hold the recently created rank of Marshal of Artillery and Novikov is the first who became a Marshal of Air Forces.

Stalin as supreme commander-in-chief leads an army of more than 350 divisions in the field and many in reserve. He is more than a political factor in the Red Army and as a marshal is far more than a figurehead. His 350 divisions probably come to 5,000,000 men.

CHAPTER 4

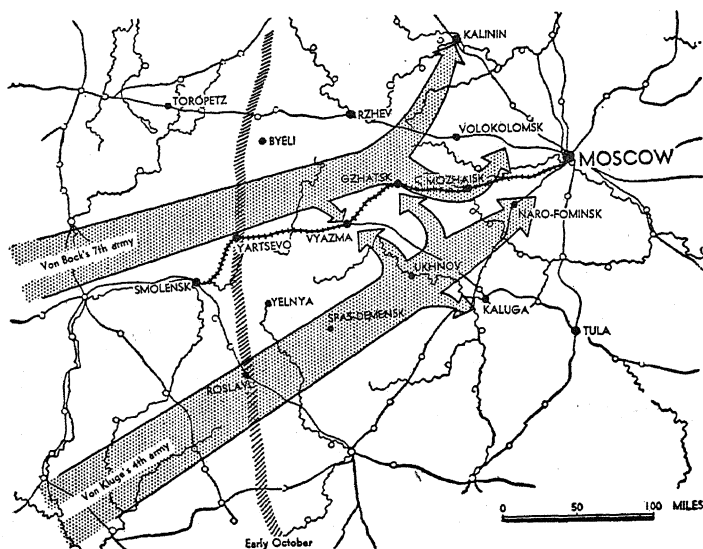
The Battle for Moscow—I

FIVE months and three days after the Germans invaded Russia the Nazi army was close to Moscow. It had moved forward in three great sweeps, the first beginning on the opening day of war, June 22, 1941, the second beginning on October 3 after the capture of Smolensk and the last on November 16 when it threw in everything it had in a desperate attempt to reach the capital.

It was November 25 and the final offensive was in its ninth day. Major General Pavel Belov, commander of the cavalry force that was to be called the 1st Guards Cavalry Corps, was in a dugout close to Kashira only seventy miles southeast of Moscow. Facing him was part of the German General Heinz Guderian's 2d Tank Army that had succeeded already in by-passing Tula and was well on its way towards getting behind Moscow. Guderian's assignment was to encircle the capital from the south. Another force was to move around it to the north.

The phone rang in Belov's dugout. It was headquarters calling and General Zhukov was on the wire. Zhukov was the front commander, having succeeded Timoshenko a month before. Belov was told the time had come to strike back.

Zhukov said that reinforcements were on the way



THE BATTLE FOR MOSCOW — I

Dotted line shows front line as of early October before first attack on Moscow. Arrows show directions of von Bock's and von Kluge's armies.

and that he was to use the reserves as soon as they arrived. He suggested that Belov repulse German frontal attacks and use his own striking power on the German flanks.

That same night another Soviet commander, Lieutenant General Konstantin Rokossovsky, was fighting a losing battle along the highway that runs northwest from Moscow. The phone rang in his dugout. Rokossovsky has described the conversation:

“‘Stalin speaking. What’s the situation?’ I explained it to him in detail, trying not to forget even the small things. I explained our position on every part of my

sector. Then I heard the quiet voice again. 'Hold even stronger. We'll help you. That's all.' "

And so it was that up and down the Moscow front in those days towards the end of November Headquarters began throwing its strategic reserves into the battle. For months the divisions on the front had been mauled and pushed back. Some were surrounded and never heard of again. Others were cut to pieces. But there was always some sort of a line and at no point did the Germans have an open road.

On the main highway west of the city Lieutenant General Leonid Govorov was holding out. Mozhaisk had fallen. On December 1 the Germans finding they could not break through by forward plunges began encircling movements to turn his line.

But Zhukov was tightening his front, creating a giant spring that would snap back when he felt the time was at hand. This is the way he distributed his forces. He had seven huge armies and two cavalry corps. His front was 200 miles wide, 80 miles north of Moscow and 120 miles to the south.

In the far north he put Lieutenant General Dmitri Lelushenko, the thirty-eight-year-old general who later was to make such an impression on Wendell L. Willkie.

Next to Lelushenko he put Lieutenant General Vasili Kuznetsov, a quiet little man with a small, Hitler-type mustache.

South of Kuznetsov was tall, lean Major General A. A. Vlasov, whose dark-rimmed spectacles made him look something like a schoolmaster.

Below Vlasov was General Rokossovsky, the able commander who later was to have charge of the exter-

mination of the German Sixth Army at Stalingrad.

Next in line and holding the most important sector was General Govorov, another officer with a Hitler-type mustache. In the following summer he would be given command of the entire Leningrad Front.

At the southern end of the line was Colonel General Philip Golikov who had only just returned from a military mission to London and Washington and who later would command the Voronezh Front.

They were General Zhukov's seven army commanders. Belov and his 1st Guards Cavalry Corps worked in between Boldin and Golikov on the south. The 2d Guards Cavalry Corps led by young Major General Lev Dovator was assigned to cooperate with General Rokossovsky's army on the north.

Slowly Zhukov pulled his armies in towards the capital, all the time bringing up reserves from the deep rear and hiding them in the woods near the city. He played them out gradually after November 25 but he was not prepared to launch his great counter-offensive until December 6.

To keep these reserves in hand the Russian High Command had to pay a price. Already on October 13 the call had gone out to the people of Moscow. Volunteers were needed, men of all ages, with training or without it, and they were needed to help hold back the Nazi army until the high command was ready to use its trained reserves. On that same afternoon thousands of men showed up at the recruiting stations with packs on their backs containing extra clothing, food and tin cups. They were civilian workers from non-defense factories, office employees and others. Some had had military training, but

not much of it. Within a few days they were organized into battalions, sent to barracks and organized into divisions. On the sixth day they went into the fighting as the 1st, 2d, 3d and 4th Moscow Communist Divisions.

They were the best men Moscow had. They should have been trained properly. They should have been equipped properly. But the Germans were coming on, and the high command needed time. The Russians on the firing line were falling back, fighting for every village, for every crossroads, for every bridge. But this was blitzkrieg and the Germans had the planes and the tanks.

Not all of the volunteer divisions were sent directly into battle. Several went into the trenches that women were digging west of the city's outskirts. They had no uniforms. They lacked heavy equipment, but they waited there in the mud, rain and cold for the Germans and dug themselves in at the most crucial part of the line. To the defense line held by the 3d Volunteer division came a call for several hundred men to be rushed to aid the 4th Volunteer division, which was being cut to bits down near Borovsk south of the highway to Smolensk and Minsk. Everyone wanted to go. Still they had no uniforms and still they had nothing but light machine guns and rifles. The men of Moscow died by the thousands, yet still the Germans advanced. The volunteers fought and died, not knowing, for they could not have known, the plans of the high command. In the meantime the regular reserve divisions moved up from the east, not to the firing line but to the woods near the city to be used when Zhukov was ready to use them.

The Germans took village after village. The Moscow

volunteers tried to hold them, failed, but died in the ruins. When Hitler heard of the men against him he screamed that he was about to destroy the last army before Moscow. But he did not know any more than the volunteers knew that the Kremlin was tightening its spring and that one day soon the reserve divisions would be thrown into battle.

And that is about what the situation was on that November night when the telephone rang in Belov's dug-out. It was the 25th of November. Snow was on the ground. Already winter was chaining Germany's mechanized army to the roads. The time was approaching when Russia would strike back with the force of a sledgehammer. Until then some reserves would be used to slow down the enemy advance. The Russian armies would move from passive to active defense.

While Belov was still on the phone some of the reserves were already moving, trained divisions from the Urals, from the upper Volga and from distant Siberia. Some were concentrated due north of Moscow just east of the Moscow-Volga canal, ready to help Generals Lelushenko, Kuznetsov, Vlasov and Rokossovsky. Others were just west of Moscow ready to help Govorov on the main road to Smolensk. The remainder were south of the capital just behind Generals Boldin, Belov and Golikov.

I think that Zhukov used his northern and southern reserves a little sooner than he had intended to, but he had to because of the German swing to encircle the capital. That plan had to be stopped at any cost.

In the center, however, where Govorov and Rokos-

sovky were holding the line, he continued to wait. Rokossovsky had some bad days. At one place several German tanks and a company or so of infantry got in behind Rokossovsky and were not destroyed until they had reached the outskirts of Khimki, the little village only fifteen miles from Moscow. If you go out there to-day you can see that smashed column. One tank got farther than the others. Its rusty wreckage marks the nearest approach to Moscow the Germans ever made.

Govorov's worst days were on December 1, 2, 3 and 4 when the Germans, having failed to gain by frontal assaults along the main highway, tried to surround the defenders by attacking to the north and south. But as Govorov told us later, in a little house in Mozhaisk after he had driven the Nazis back, he knew of the German plan. Some of his scouts had captured a map disclosing the lines of proposed attack.

Govorov was holding the town of Kubinka forty miles from the capital. On the morning of the 1st of December the Nazis tried to take it from the flanks. From the south they sent two regiments of infantry supported by sixty tanks. From the north they sent the 267th Infantry division.

This attack, however, was only a feint as Govorov knew. The main drive was coming further to the south and north. The idea was to break through at points far from Kubinka and join forces at Galitsino some distance behind Kubinka. For the southern pincer the Germans used a large tank column supported by infantry and sub-machine-gunners. On the north they tossed in parts of the 252d, 87th and 78th Infantry Divisions.

On the south the Germans did break through on a narrow sector. Their tanks came out near the headquarters of Colonel Leonid Polosukhin, commander of an infantry division. The entire division staff used firearms for an hour or two and only left the field after another command post had been organized. Then Polosukhin pulled a trick which the Russians were to repeat several times later in the war. Before his new defense line he ordered his men to build a barrier of straw and hay, twigs, logs, wood from near-by houses, anything that that would burn. It was more than a quarter of a mile long and it was laid in the one place where the terrain favored the enemy.

So when the tanks came up Polosukhin gave orders for the barrier to be burned. The fire started slowly for the hay and straw were damp from the snow. Oil and gasoline were poured on and the flames climbed to seven, eight and nine feet in the air. That is what faced the German tank column, and when the armored machines turned to swing away they exposed their vulnerable sides to crippling antitank fire.

By this time General Govorov was able to get tank forces up to Polosukhin. Before the end of the second day the Nazis had been beaten back to their original positions.

On the northern side of his line Govorov had to use everything he had to spare. He was holding on December 4. That night Zhukov's reserves came up and on the 5th and 6th Govorov's army was on the offensive. By the 7th the Russians in this area north of Kubinka had recovered sixteen villages.

And that is how it came about that the spring gradu-

ally tightened. On the night of December 5 all of Zhukov's reserves were in position. Early in the morning of the 6th, some hours before dawn, his seven armies and two cavalry corps, all reinforced, were attacking all along the line.

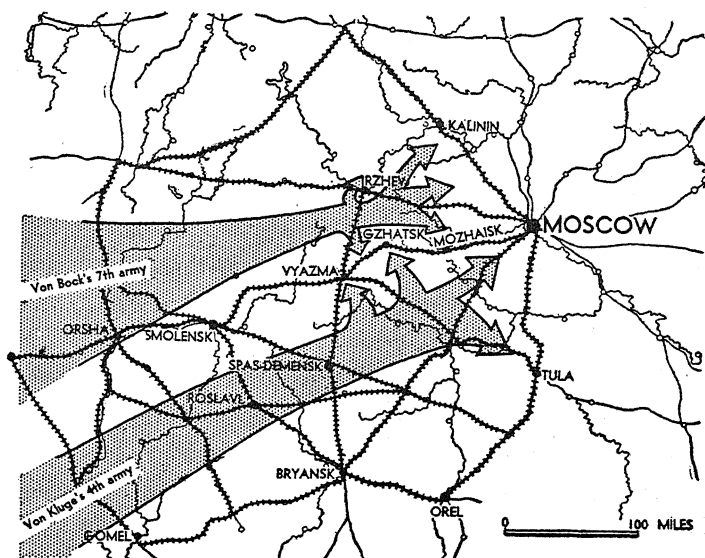
CHAPTER 5

The Battle for Moscow—II

THE GERMAN commander facing Zhukov was General Field Marshal Fedor von Bock, whose force consisted of thirty-three infantry divisions (perhaps 500,000 men), thirteen tank divisions (each one including two tank regiments of about 400 tanks and one motorized regiment), and five motorized divisions. These fifty-one divisions were divided into two field armies, the 7th and the 4th. Von Bock himself led the 7th and the 4th was entrusted to General Field Marshal Gunther von Kluge.

When on October 3 von Bock launched his second great drive on Moscow he had passed Smolensk and had about two hundred miles to go. He advanced in two great columns. His own 7th Army moved parallel to and about forty-five miles north of the main Smolensk-Moscow highway. He sent von Kluge's 4th Army parallel to and about sixty-five miles south of the same road. Von Bock moved through open country. Von Kluge roughly followed the highway that runs through Roslavl, Spas Demensk, Ukhnov, Malo-Yaroslavetz and Podolsk to Moscow. The jumping-off line corresponds to a pencil line on the map that runs north and south through Yartsevo on the Smolensk-Moscow highway to Roslavl.

In the first two weeks the two armies made tremen-



THE BATTLE FOR MOSCOW — II

dous gains. The Russians fell back all along the line and it was not until after the middle of October that the defenders were able to get a foothold.

Smashing his way along north of the main Smolensk-Moscow highway, von Bock pushed straight ahead and only sent one flying column southward to attack Vyasma from the north. Von Kluge too moved rapidly from Roslavl through Spas Demensk and it was not until he had reached and captured Ukhov that he sent one of his columns to hammer at Vyasma from the southeast. The defense of Vyasma became hopeless and the Russians pulled out.

Now both von Bock and von Kluge split the rest of their forces. Von Bock sent one flying column northeast toward Kalinin on the Moscow-Leningrad road,

while the bulk of his army fanned out with some divisions making for Mozhaïsk only sixty-five miles from Moscow on the Smolensk road and others driving more to the north toward Volokolomsk. Von Kluge sent one large task force to seize Gzhatsk which is between Vyasma and Mozhaïsk on the Smolensk road. Another plunged straight ahead towards Malo-Yaroslavetz and the third turned sharply to the southeast towards Kaluga with the intention of pushing on to Tula which is due south of Moscow.

Those were great days for the victorious Germans who had never been defeated on any battlefield, and von Bock as he reported to Adolf Hitler must have been certain there was nothing that could stop him. Already just south of Mozhaïsk some of von Kluge's men were running into the Moscow volunteer divisions, the men without uniforms, the men sent into battle without heavy machine guns or heavy artillery.

But already the German offensive was slowing up. On October 19 Stalin had announced that the command of the Central Front had been entrusted to Zhukov and that Timoshenko had been transferred to the south. There were many signs of increasing Russian resistance. Von Bock in his eastward march north of the Smolensk highway had aided in the capture of Vyasma but the troops he sent to the north for the capture of Rzhev had been stopped on the high tableland around the town. Here the upper reaches of the mighty Volga River swing in a great curve to the south from Kalinin to Rzhev before they turn north. The Russians had blown up the bridges. They were strongly fortified on the north bank.

Von Bock's force that had headed northeast toward Kalinin had aided General Straus's 9th Army in the capture of that city, but the Germans were unable to push further to the east. The divisions he had sent to capture Volokolomsk accomplished their assignment but could not push on. The only gains the Germans could make in the last ten days of October amounted to about fifteen miles in the center of the line, just beyond Mozhaisk, and about twenty miles in the south in the direction of Tula.

That is when von Bock stopped to regroup his forces, study the situation and make his plans for the final assault which he scheduled for November 16. Even at this time it is doubtful whether von Bock saw the handwriting on the wall. There was snow on the ground but not enough to hamper military operations. The last two weeks had tired his men and weakened his divisions but he still thought he could get to Moscow.

Some weeks later I had an opportunity to discuss the situation in early October with three of the seven Russian army commanders, Generals Kuznetsov and Vlasov on the Russian right flank and General Govorov in the center. They all agreed that in those days the Soviet plan was to pull back, to keep Soviet forces intact, to inflict losses on the enemy when possible, but always to pull back towards Moscow. They could, they said, have stood fast and exchanged blows with the Germans at any time, but the price would have been terrific and the outcome doubtful. And so they fought as best they could without risking the bulk of their forces, relying on the plan of the high command which was to strike back when the right time came.

During this period, they said, the Germans had great superiority in tanks and planes, although their artillery was deficient in one important respect. They had little light artillery, Nazi military experts having decided that mortars can replace light guns. As General Govorov explained later, mortars can replace light artillery for short-range fire but when the range is up to four, five and six miles they cannot do the job.

Now too the Russians were improving their defenses outside of the capital, laying barbed wire, mobilizing peasants and women from the city to dig trenches, tank traps and artillery positions. The government was struggling to make up for several deficiencies in its own army's equipment, notably in sub-machine guns which are invaluable for forest warfare.

This problem was solved with astonishing ingenuity. The Red Army had a sub-machine gun that was easy to manufacture and easy to handle. It was light, weighing only ten pounds, fired seventy-one shots from a drum and had one great advantage that it consisted of only eighty-three metal parts. I believe that most sub-machine guns, like the Thompson made in America, for example, have more than two hundred parts. To turn its gun out rapidly the Russians took old rifle barrels and cut them in half, thereby making barrels for two sub-machine guns. Within a month this weapon, invented by Major General Georgi Degtyarev, was being turned out by the thousands in factories, trade schools and shops.

Von Bock waited just sixteen days before he made his last dive for Moscow, sixteen days he needed to regroup his fifty-one divisions, but sixteen days that Zhukov needed to bring reserve divisions from the distant Ural

Mountains and from Siberia. The German plan of attack may have been smart, but I think that there never was any doubt in Zhukov's mind what it consisted of. And therein lay its weakness.

Von Bock's idea was to hold in the center but to pin down General Govorov's divisions by constant pressure and at the same time to send flying columns north and south of Moscow. Three columns would drive down from the north, four up from the south, and the outside columns would meet, completing the encirclement of Moscow, at Orekhovo-Zuevo fifty miles behind the capital.

The backbone of von Bock's northern columns were the 3d and 4th Tank Groups, commanded by Generals Huepner and Herman von Hoth. They consisted of the 1st, 2d, 5th, 6th, 7th, 10th and 11th tank divisions, aided by the 14th and 36th motorized divisions and the 23d, 35th and 106th infantry divisions.

Von Bock gave von Kluge command of the southern columns whose spearhead was to be Guderian's 2d Tank Army, consisting of the 3d, 4th, 17th, and 18th tank divisions, aided by the 10th and 29th motorized divisions of the 167th infantry division.

In the center von Bock held the 7th, 9th, 12th, 13th, 20th and 43d army corps, supported by the 19th and 20th tank divisions.

On November 16 the Germans took the offensive and if it had not been for the reserve divisions that were coming up from the east they would have succeeded for the German wings were strong and at times it looked to some observers as if nothing could stop them. The northern force, smashing forward in three columns,

hammered the Russians back. The northern column grabbed Klin fifty miles from Moscow on the road to Kalinin and Leningrad, crossed the highway and pushed the armies of Lelushenko and Kuznetsov all the way back to Dmitrov twenty-five miles to the east of Klin and about forty miles due north of Moscow. It was stopped on the Moscow-Volga Canal that runs through Dmitrov. The central column, starting south of Klin, pushed Vlasov across open country, turning as it moved in a southerly direction toward Moscow. The southern column starting from Volokolomsk drove Rokossovsky back through Istra just thirty miles from the capital.

The most dangerous drive was the one made by the central column for Vlasov was pushed as far as Krasnaya Polyana just twenty-five miles from Moscow. The few tanks that got near Khimki never created much of a threat and were quickly exterminated.

The great southern force, of which Guderian's 2d Tank Army was the hammer, also moved rapidly. Von Kluge sent one of his four columns directly towards Moscow from Naro-Fominsk forty-two miles to the southwest. It never got very far. The few tanks that got across the deep gully through which the Nara River runs were destroyed by General Govorov's men. Another column started south of Naro-Fominsk and tried to reach Serpukhov on the Moscow-Tula road, but this drive was stopped by one Russian division commanded by Colonel M. A. Siyazov which later became the 12th Guards Rifle Division. Siyazov operated with General Boldin's army that was entrusted with the defense of Tula and the entire approaches to Moscow from the south.

The other two columns of von Kluge's southern force were commanded by Guderian and his assignment was to take Tula and continue on behind Moscow. He never took that city whose defense is one of the most heroic stories of the war.

General Boldin, to whose army General Belov's 1st Guards Cavalry Corps was attached, has told the story of its defense, and his story paid tribute to the people of Tula, that city of armsmiths and ammunition whose population dug trenches and built barricades under shellfire and then sent a workers regiment to aid the army in the field.

When he failed to take Tula by frontal assault, Guderian got a new assignment from von Kluge. Now he would by-pass the city and move toward Stalinogorsk, Veniev and Kashira. If possible he would drive straight from Kashira to Moscow, but if at Kashira the resistance was too strong he would turn sharply back to the west and cut the Moscow road above Tula. At the same time another of von Kluge's groups would clear Colonel Siyazov's force and join Guderian at the highway. From there they would move together for the capital.

For his drive to Kashira Guderian used three of his four tank divisions, the 3d, 4th and 17th, and called up two fresh infantry divisions, the 29th and 296th. For three days Boldin held. The battles were bloody and violent. Stalinogorsk fell. At Veniev the Russians held for two days, disabling thirty-six tanks and a regiment of motorized infantry on one country road. Then the Germans attacked the town from two sides and pushed to the north. On the fourth day Veniev fell and the Germans were quick to develop their successes by fanning

out to the north and northeast, heading for Kashira.

"The German move was quick," Boldin said later, "but it was clear at this time that the enemy would fail. They were simply extending their already-extended lines of communications, making difficult the supply of fuel and ammunition. The path towards Kashira was so narrow we could have cut it at any time. The German flanks were exposed."

Guderian took one crack at Kashira and found Belov's cavalymen holding fast so he followed his alternate plan. He left a covering force of two divisions to hold his line and led two tank divisions supported by infantry in a quick move to the west, heading back for the Moscow-Tula highway. The 3d and 4th tank divisions moved across country in four columns, capturing as they went several important towns in Tula's rear. At the same time von Kluge sent his 31st infantry division towards the Tula road from the far side, but again Colonel Siyazov threw it back.

It was about this time that General Belov, biding his time in his dugout near Kashira, received the phone call from Zhukov that was to move his cavalry corps from passive to active defense. He began to hammer at the divisions Guderian had left there. But Guderian continued to move his tanks towards the Tula road. Twenty machines entered Kostrovo, thirty moved into Revia-kino and forty captured Rudniovo. Still a fourth column of armored machines headed straight for Tula. It looked as if nothing could stop him. Tula was under fire from all sides. Boldin was having a hard time keeping his forces intact.

Finally, on December 3 Guderian came out on the

Moscow-Tula highway and Tula was cut off except for a narrow strip of open country just west of the road. On December 4 only three or four miles separated Guderian's tanks from other German forces that were coming in from the west.

Again General Boldin describes the situation:

"It looked perhaps as if the Germans would achieve their objective. We fell back, narrowing our front, regrouping our forces, but at the same time creating several striking forces consisting of mobile artillery and large numbers of tanks. By this time more of our tanks and a lot of our infantry were arriving from the army's strategic reserves."

"We had fallen back enough. On the night of December 4th the situation was such that we could fulfill the second part of our plan, which was to encircle and destroy the Guderian force."

Boldin began then to execute his part of the counter-offensive. He began slowly, just as Belov had begun, as Rokossovsky, Govorov, Vlasov, Golikov, Kuznetsov, Lelushenko were beginning. By the morning of December 6 the Russian offensive was in full swing. Everywhere the reserves were in the line. Everywhere the Germans were being rocked back. Everywhere they were being hit with a strength that they did not believe existed.

The winter was on. It was cold, all right, but the weather could never explain what happened to the German army in the next two months. Still, it played its part. The German army was a more mechanized army than the Red Army. Consequently in winter its activities were more hampered by deep snows and piling

drifts. But there were many other factors contributing to the German defeat before Moscow.

List one of them as firepower. Zhukov had it on that 6th of December. Remember that the German lines of communications were long and hard to protect from the vicious assaults by Russian partisans working in the German rear. I suppose that the German High Command before Moscow committed the greatest mistake any military man can commit, which is not to know his enemy. The Germans did not know their enemy. They did not know how many divisions it could assemble. They did not know that Russians will fight and die for their country regardless of how strong their enemy is. They did not know that the Russians they were fighting were trained soldiers, disciplined, accustomed to carrying out their orders, and ready to carry them out willingly.

I want to tell you what happened in the next few months, what happened to the German Army that Hitler built, the army that had never been beaten in the field, the army that smashed into Norway, grabbed Holland and Belgium, drove the British out of Dunkirk, smashed France and moved into the Balkans. Before Moscow it suffered its first great defeat. Later it was to lose on many other fronts, before Stalingrad in Russia, in Egypt and Lybia to a new British Army, in Tunisia and Sicily to a fighting British and American force.

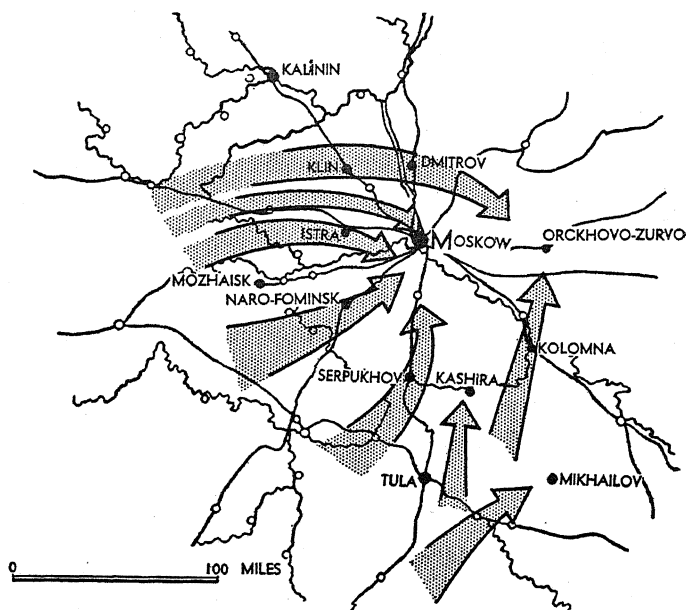
CHAPTER 6

The Battle for Moscow—III

AT the end of November Zhukov had his seven armies and two cavalry corps operating in four groups, guarding the four main approaches to Moscow. The northern group consisted of the armies of Generals Lelushenko and Kuznetsov. The northwestern group included the armies of Generals Vlasov and Rokossovsky, aided by General Dovator's cavalry corps. The southwestern group was commanded by General Govorov. The southern group consisted of the armies of Generals Boldin and Golikov with General Belov's cavalry corps operating between them.

Zhukov tightened his line and assigned his reserve divisions where they were needed. In Moscow the boom of distant gunfire could be heard, but only a few men knew what the map showed.

The northern group had been pushed to the far bank of the Moscow-Volga Canal which runs due north from Moscow. In this sector was the German force that had hoped to encircle Moscow from the north, and here the nearest Germans were thirty-five miles from the capital. The northwestern group was guarding the highways that come in from Leningrad and Riga. Istra had fallen and here the Germans were only twenty-five miles away. Govorov's southwestern group was still holding Ku-



THE BATTLE FOR MOSCOW — III

Arrows show directions of intended advance in German plan for final encirclement and assault on Moscow.

binka forty miles from the capital. The southern group had blocked the move of Guderian to encircle Moscow on the south but it was having a hard time hanging on to Tula.

But now the Soviet High Command was ready. This is what happened:

NORTHERN GROUP

There were eighteen inches of snow on the ground and the thermometer registered 10 degrees below zero when I visited troops of the northern group several

weeks after the start of its counter-offensive. They already had crossed back over to the west bank of the Moscow-Volga Canal, advancing twenty-five miles further west to capture Klin on the Moscow-Leningrad highway, and at the time I saw them they were still pushing to the west.

Never before had I seen such destruction. Scattered along the roads and far off into the fields you could see tanks with their turrets blown off and jagged holes in their sides. Trucks were overturned. Windshields were smashed. Engines were shattered. Here and there you could see broken headlights that had been ripped from a car by the force of an explosion. On the ground were the remnants of tool cases, German and Russian helmets, torn maps, bayonets, broken rifles, extra machine-gun barrels, shell cases, trench mortar bombs, beltloads of machine-gun ammunition. Dead horses were strewn about and occasionally I could see a dying horse, still standing with his back to the wind, his forelegs bent, struggling to keep on his feet as if he knew that once he went down he would never get up.

The destruction was grouped at many points along the country lanes that curved back and forth over rolling country that was partly covered with forest. It looked as if the Germans had been trapped at these places by Russians attacking from the woods with artillery and mortar fire and then exterminated by automatic rifle and sub-machine-gun fire. Two of the most striking scenes were in the villages of Petrovskoye and Paveltsevo about fifteen miles west of Klin. In the first there were at least 175 wrecked vehicles including tanks, troop carriers, armored cars, assault guns and antitank

guns. They lined a narrow street that led to a destroyed bridge at the outskirts of the village. Engineers were building a wooden bridge near the old one. At Paveltsevo the damaged trucks and cars had been rifled by Russian soldiers who had picked up everything usable and when I got there the peasant women were picking up what few things were left that might be useful when they started to rebuild their homes. Near these vehicles were dead Germans and Russians, their bodies partly covered with snow, their helmets lying five or six feet from where they had fallen. One man's entire shoulder had been blown off. Another had a clean hole through his forehead. As I went along the road, looking for General Kuznetsov's headquarters, I noticed Russian peasants cutting up the dead horses for food.

About sundown I found the General in a peasant's hut of graying, unpainted wood, in the little village of Nagornoye, which was only about forty miles from Moscow.

General Kuznetsov told the correspondents who grouped around him in that small room of unhewn logs that the German force trying to encircle Moscow from the north had driven his own army to the far bank of the Moscow-Volga Canal in the region of Dmitrov about forty miles from the capital. Lelushenko's army on Kuznetsov's right, however, was able to stay on the west bank. Opposing them was a powerful German force that included parts of the German 3d and 4th Tank Groups.

On November 27 the Germans captured Rogachov and Yachroma on the west side of the canal and came out opposite Dmitrov. Lelushenko's job then was to

keep up pressure from the north so that the German commander would not dare to throw all his forces against Dmitrov. Kuznetsov's first assignment was to prevent the enemy from crossing the canal, seizing Dmitrov and occupying the highway that leads due south into Moscow.

On that day the Germans faced Dmitrov with the 6th tank division and the 23d infantry division. During the night they brought up the 7th tank division and several regiments of the 41st infantry division as well as all of the 106th infantry division. This force together with neighboring divisions occupied a front twenty-one miles wide. On November 28 they tried to force the canal, but only at Dmitrov itself did they succeed in reaching the far bank and the twenty-four tanks that got across were destroyed before a bridgehead could be formed.

By the next day both Lelushenko and Kuznetsov had their reserve divisions in the line and on the following night they began their own counter-offensive. General Kuznetsov said that it began slowly so that the Germans believed it consisted only of local counter-attacks. Lelushenko headed for Rogachov, and finally captured it after a great loss of life because it had been necessary to cross swampland that was covered with a thin layer of ice at a time when the swamps were under German artillery and mortar fire. At the same time Lelushenko, far out on the right flank and to the north of the German troops facing him, sent Major General Pavel Rotmistrov, commander of the 3d Guards Tank Brigade, in a wide sweep to the German rear. Rotmistrov was the officer who a year later was to command the guards corps that captured Kotelnikovo 110 miles southwest

of Stalingrad. A tall, thin man with dark-rimmed glasses, he was going to turn out to be one of the best tank officers in the Red Army. Rotmistrov did his job well, and within a few days the Germans found a mechanized detachment fighting in its rear.

Meanwhile, Kuznetsov started across the canal for Yachroma on the high western bank. The temperature on the night his divisions moved was 1 degree below zero. Infantry men waded across in water up to their shoulders, holding their rifles and machine guns high above their heads. First he got into Yachroma's southern suburbs; then he was driven out. He went in again and this time his men hung on.

Kuznetsov then sent the bulk of his forces a little to the southwest before turning back to the west. Now he and Lelushenko held in their center and attacked on the wings with the result that the entire German force in the area was rapidly being outflanked on both sides. The Germans started back. Reinforcements came up. Troops in retreat and troops coming up got into each other's way in the narrow roads. Equipment piled up. By now the pressure was on. The Russians were attacking in the center as well as on the flanks. The German commander gave the order for a general retreat due west towards Klin on the Moscow-Leningrad road.

But Lelushenko on the right and Kuznetsov on the left hammered on, crossed the Leningrad highway north and south of Klin and decided to encircle the entire German force occupying the Klin region. They never completed the encirclement but they cut all the roads leading to the west after all but five German regiments had escaped in a desperately rapid retreat. Rot-

mistrov's tanks were west of the town. There was no hope for the surrounded force.

Outside of Klin whose few brick buildings, brick factories and many wooden houses were by this time under Russian shell fire, the Germans hung on to Hill 220, a height which dominated the region. They opened a heavy barrage, hoping to clear a way for escape and sent detachments of sub-machine-gunners and mortar detachments to wipe out the Russians that were barring the way of escape. Six times the Russians attacked this hill and six times they failed to take it. On the seventh try they made it but the Russian commander Colonel Molev was killed in the assault.

Now Lelushenko's men were north and northwest of the town and Kuznetsov's troops were to the south and southwest, squeezing the garrison day and night, while the bulk of the Lelushenko-Kuznetsov armies continued the pursuit to the west. At 2 p.m. on December 14 the Russians sent a lieutenant and two soldiers with a flag of truce. Back came a refusal to surrender from the Klin garrison commander. It was scrawled in pencil on a small piece of paper. It was hard to read the signature but it looked like Colonel Nedant.

About 4 p.m. a terrible snowstorm began and it snowed so heavily that later when I was talking to General Kuznetsov he could not tell me how many Russians had died in the assault of the town. Hundreds died certainly but the snow covered their bodies. At 11 p.m. the attack began. First the Russians had to wipe out the machine-gunners and automatic riflemen perched on Klin's rooftops. Then a battalion fought its way into the brick factory on the town's southwest outskirts, and

while other forces attacked from the north two battalions, under cover of the storm, followed a ravine that leads into the center of the town. In the morning they attacked and captured the railroad station, but it was not until the following day, December 16, that Klin was in Russian hands.

General Kuznetsov said that the Germans had suffered their greatest defeat near the Moscow-Volga Canal, and that after that it was simply a situation in which the Germans were trying to get out as fast as they could with the Russians trying to stop them.

All along the line from there to Klin and beyond, he said, the Germans had abandoned their wounded as well as much of their equipment. His own army, he said, in the first fourteen days of the counter-offensive, had captured 299 tanks, about 3,000 vehicles and more than 150 guns. He estimated the German dead in Klin itself at 3,000.

The entire northern group, the armies of Kuznetsov and Lelushenko together, had defeated the 1st, 6th and 7th tank divisions, the 14th and 36th motorized divisions, the 23d infantry division and parts of the 41st and 106th infantry divisions. Only a few miles to the south the northwestern group was operating with equal success.

NORTHWESTERN GROUP

This group combined the armies of Vlasov on the north, Rokossovsky on the south and General Dovator's Cossack cavalry corps. Its assignment had been to defend the highways leading in from Leningrad and Volokolomsk. With the counter-offensive it was to drive

westward, parallel to the armies of Kuznetsov and Lelushenko.

I am sorry to say that I never had a chance to talk to General Rokossovsky, who undoubtedly is one of the Red Army's most capable field commanders, and his force constituted the bulk of the northwestern group. I did, however, pass an afternoon with General Vlasov's army and some months later I had an afternoon with Dovator's cavalry corps, although Dovator himself died in the early days of the counter-offensive. He has become one of the three or four great military heroes of the Red Army.

At the end of November General Rokossovsky, who was forty-six years old, and his forty-two-year-old chief of staff, Lieutenant General Mikhail Malinin, had their 16th Army close to Moscow and astride the highways leading in from Leningrad and Volokolomsk. Behind him in reserve was Dovator's cavalry corps. To his right, covering the territory between the Leningrad highway and the Moscow-Volga Canal, was General Vlasov's 20th Army Group.

Facing Rokossovsky were the 5th, 10th and 11th tank divisions, the 35th infantry division and a division of SS troops, the Black Guards of the Nazi party, admitted by the Russians to be the best-equipped and toughest fighters the Germans had. Facing Vlasov were the 2d tank division and a part of the 10th infantry division. The enemy facing Rokossovsky was only about thirty miles from Moscow, but the small armored force opposite Vlasov had only twenty miles to go for it had reached the village of Krasnaya Polyana by the end of November.

Throughout the early part and middle of the month the Russians had fallen back, but their resistance stiffened as they neared the capital, with the Nazis struggling to divide and encircle the defending divisions and the Russians relying on defense in depth coupled with sharp counter-attacks to keep their lines intact. The situation had become so serious on Vlasov's sector that the front commander General Zhukov gave the order for him to start his counter-offensive on December 2.

Now Vlasov had working with him three officers whose names were to become famous in the Red Army before the end of the war. One was Major General Alexander Lizukov, forty-one years old, commander of the 1st Guards Motorized Division, who was to be killed in action the following June in fighting around Voronezh. His son was commanding one of the division's companies. Another excellent officer was Major General Andrei Kravchenko, leader of a tank brigade, who during the Battle for Stalingrad was to command the 4th tank corps which would win the title of 5th Guards Stalingrad Tank Corps. The third officer was Major General Ivan Chistiakov, a division commander who in the Stalingrad counter-offensive would be given command of the 21st Army.

When Vlasov started his counter-offensive the Germans had taken not only Krasnaya Polyana but the near-by villages of Gorky, Katushi and Lugovaya.

So he started out on the morning of December 2 from the village of Koivo. Five times Gorky and Katushi changed hands, but they were in Russian hands when Lugovaya too fell, forcing the Germans to evacuate Krasnaya Polyana. Now the Russians were attacking in

force, and the German column began to retreat. The 2d tank division fell back a little to the northwest. The Russians followed through the woods, coming out on the country lanes with hand grenades, mortars and light artillery, splitting the armored battalions and smashing up small units of armored infantry that were traveling in half-track troop carriers.

The 2d Tank Division was on the run and German infantry that came up to plug the line could not stand the Russian pressure. Several regiments of the 106th infantry tried to hold until von Bock could send reserves. Reinforcements arrived but they failed to hold. As the Russians pushed on the Germans in this sector tried to stay on the west side of the Leningrad highway, but General Kuznetsov's army on the north had already cut the road south of Klin and a brigade from Rokossovsky's army to the south had cut the road below Solnechnogorsk.

On December 11 the Germans were pulling out as fast as they could move. The 2d tank division kept going and the Russians never caught up with it again. Late that evening Vlasov's men moved into Solnechnogorsk, and crossed to the eastern side of the Leningrad road where it ran into the German 23d division of infantry and units brought from the rear.

It was about this time that I visited Vlasov's sector. Kravchenko's tanks, the first to reach the main road, had moved already further to the west in an attempt to cut off the German line of escape. Lizukov's motorized division and Chistiakov's infantry division were driving hard, advancing from ten to twelve miles a day. The only division commander I could find who had time to

talk to anyone was Major General Fedor Korol, commander of the Russian 331st Infantry Division. His column was mopping up the strong points that the Nazis left to cover their retreat.

We left Moscow on the afternoon of December 14, perhaps six or seven correspondents, a censor from the press department of the Foreign Office and a guide from military headquarters. I think the guide was lost only part of the time although it seemed to us that he seldom knew where he was. That was not his fault because General Korol moved his headquarters two or three times a day as the counter-offensive continued. We were looking for Korol because the guide knew that General Vlasov was with him for a few days.

The first stop was Solnechnogorsk, a village of perhaps 3,000 persons in peacetime where as we drove into the outskirts we saw civilians burying Russian dead in a small park or square. Soldiers were standing around, waiting for their next assignment, some trying to start abandoned German motorcycles, others shooting German sub-machine guns at barns. There were perhaps three hundred women and children around who had come back from the woods after the Germans had gone. When a Russian villager or peasant cannot get away, he goes to the woods and lives there as long as his food holds out. I think the angriest civilian in Solnechnogorsk was a little boy that C. L. Sulzberger of the New York Times talked to. He had hurried to the woods with his old grandmother only to find on his return that the Germans had eaten his pet pig.

It was snowing the following morning when we

turned west off the highway in our hunt for Vlasov and Korol.

Along the narrow road towards the front we saw wagons carrying supplies to the troops, soldiers running telephone wire to replace the cables that had been destroyed during the German retreat, smashed tanks and armored cars, and three women and a little boy walking across the fields back to their village from the woods. At some little villages there were evidences of battle, with destroyed guns, dead lying about and still-burning houses. Other villages were untouched, indicating that retreat through them had been rapid.

The soldiers we talked to explained the German system of retreat and the Russian methods of pursuit. Every German rearguard consisted of a battalion of about 800 men, about three batteries of light artillery and perhaps twenty or thirty mortars. Once in a while this detachment would be aided by dive-bombers but on the whole the Russians had air superiority in the area, which was explained by the fact that German planes had not been equipped properly for winter flying. The Russians advanced in small infantry groups supported by tanks, antitank guns, light artillery and mortars, but they moved through the woods, constantly trying to outflank the enemy rearguard. They were only partly successful, however, in exterminating the German knots of resistance because the enemy, afraid of encirclement, constantly withdrew whenever it realized a Russian detachment was on its flank.

After driving up and down for a long time we finally found Korol's headquarters, but learned that Korol had

gone on up to the front on an inspection tour with General Vlasov.

This was the village of Nekolskoye. It was not much of a place, just one street lined with one-story wooden houses. The road turned off to the south before an imposing wreck of a church that had been neglected for years. We went into the small house that served as a headquarters and waited for the generals to return. It was apparent Korol did not intend to stay long in this village for his staff had not bothered to set up much equipment. There was just one large map spread out on a table. One unhappy-looking private was writing at a battered typewriter.

Later the generals returned, and Vlasov told us the story of the early days of the counter-offensive. The great fighting had taken place in the first days, he said, and now the Germans were simply trying to get away before the Russians caught up with them. He said he had sent a mobile column far ahead to cut off one of the roads of retreat from Volokolomsk to the north. The idea was to help General Rokossovsky's army, operating on his left flank, not only to take Volokolomsk but to take as many Germans as possible at the same time.

Meanwhile Rokossovsky, aided by Dovator's cavalry corps, was also attacking and doing very well with the help of another of Russia's fine tank commanders, Major General Mikhail Katukov of the 1st Guards Tank Brigade. He had a far tougher assignment than Vlasov had, but he had the forces to do the job.

He and his chief of staff, General Malinin, proved to be a good team as they demonstrated a year later when

the German Sixth Army at Stalingrad. Rokossovsky turned out to be one of the most capable officers in the Red Army. I do not know whether the story is true but most people in Moscow said that at the time of the German invasion this general was either in retirement or confined to quarters as a result of the purge of Red Army generals in 1937 and 1938. It is said by many observers that when the war began Marshal Shaposhnikov, then chief of staff of the army, asked Stalin to release Rokossovsky because Rokossovsky was needed at the front and that Stalin agreed.

His 16th Army did not start its counter-offensive until December 6. By that day Generals Lelushenko and Kuznetsov who had started on November 29 and General Vlasov who had started on December 2 had straightened out the line.

Rokossovsky began with everything he had because he said later he knew that the Germans had exhausted their reserves in the final attempt to reach Moscow. The German 5th tank division and 35th infantry division fought stubbornly in many counter-attacks. At Krukovo there were four counter-attacks in one day with the Germans using a full infantry division supported by sixty tanks. Often the Russians had to take strong points with the bayonet. Finally the Germans were forced out of Krukovo and on the night of December 7 Rokossovsky brought up from his reserves 70 tanks and 120 truckloads of infantry. On the afternoon of December 8 the Germans began to retreat on a wide front.

Probably at no point in the entire Moscow area were there more partisans than there were around Istra and

Volokolomsk, and Rokossovsky used them. They blew up bridges in the night. They came out of the woods to mine roads. They tossed grenades at passing trucks. As the Germans pulled out they repeatedly ran into traffic jams caused by smashed bridges and destroyed machines. They left groups of tanks and sub-machine-gunners in ambush to act as rearguards but these detachments were soon encircled or outflanked. The enemy began to abandon equipment. The retreat grew disorderly. According to Rokossovsky, at one place the Germans lost their heads when six hundred lorries and wagons piled up along a forest road. Towards these concentrations he sent planes or heavy artillery.

Now Rokossovsky sent in Dovator's cavalry corps, the unit that had fought many days in the German rear around Smolensk in September. The cavalymen moved at night, cross country, with young Dovator himself leading his divisions. Three times they charged at night under the light of a new moon; with sabers drawn, screaming like madmen, and the Russians say that the Germans fled in terror. The cavalry drove the Germans back of the Istra Lakes and on the night of December 11 Major General Afanasi Beloborodov's 9th Guards Rifle Division occupied Istra. There was not much left of this once beautiful town. Only the wreckage of homes and still-smoldering brick of many buildings. The lovely monastery of New Jerusalem, which is on the outskirts, was destroyed before it was abandoned by the Nazis.

Many months later I was told by a general in Moscow that as they pulled out the Germans blew up the dam that held back the waters of the Istra Lakes. Their idea was to wreck Moscow's water supply, although

there are other sources besides this great reservoir. Anyway the General said that the waters roared down the valley, and that thousands of men and an undetermined amount of equipment were swept away in the floods. In the following spring the bodies were picked up by the peasants and burned in huge pyres near the forests.

General Rokossovsky later wrote that the fording of this water barrier caused terrific suffering. But he estimated that his army in the first seven days of its counter-offensive had inflicted more than 13,000 casualties. There would have been more, but the Germans in this sector as in the others pulled out rapidly after the first few days of battle.

Now General Dovator's cavalry corps was ordered by the High Command to leave Rokossovsky's army, which was on its way to Volokolomsk, and turn to the south to help General Govorov's 5th Army.

The 5th Army constituted the southwestern group of General Zhukov's forces. Govorov's divisions were astride the highways leading into Moscow from Smolensk and Malo-Yaroslavets. It was led by an able commander for General Govorov later on was going to be entrusted with the command of the entire Leningrad Front, during the dangerous period when Leningrad was cut off without land communications with the rest of the Red Army.

SOUTHWESTERN GROUP

After successfully defending Kubinka forty miles from Moscow on the road to Mozhaisk and Smolensk and keeping the Germans out of Svenigorod from which

they planned to shell the capital with long-range guns, General Govorov straightened out his line and concentrated the reserves that had been assigned to his sector. On his left flank he could see that the German position astride the road to Malo-Yaroslavets was strong. He decided to concentrate on his right along the main highway. He began on December 11 with a bold stroke north of the highway. By this time his right flank was protected by General Rokossovsky's advance.

Looking back over the action of the last two weeks, it could be seen that the front commander General Zhukov was pivoting his armies about Govorov. His counter-offensive began on the wings. As the wings advanced, his right of center and left of center got going. As the right straightened out, he ordered Govorov to attack.

But Govorov had a hard time in the early weeks. He could not throw in everything he had until the armies to his right and left had advanced sufficiently to protect his flanks. So after December 11 he just hammered slowly away, first in one sector, then in another, until he had cleared the heights that run north and south through Kubinka and obtained a jumping-off line for his great drive. His December 11 move, he said later, was made without artillery preparation and took the enemy by surprise.

For a time then he was unable to do much except wait for the right day. By the end of December, however, General Boldin's army on the south had swept far enough to capture Kaluga and his own forces had knocked the Germans out of Naro-Fominsk. There remained then only two danger points on his left flank.

Malo-Yaroslavets and Borovsk. Govorov took them on January 2 and 4.

Now he was ready for his great offensive along the highway to Mozhaïsk and Smolensk. Facing him was a German force that consisted of five infantry divisions, one motorized division and one tank division, strongly entrenched in positions astride the road. On the north was the 292d German infantry division, then the 87th and the 178th. The 3d motorized division was just north of the highway and the 198th infantry division was on the south side. Below the 198th was the 7th infantry division, and backing them all up, as a sort of roving back, was the 20th tank division ready to plug any gaps in the line.

Govorov built up his offensive slowly, beginning January 5. He struck all along the German line, hunting for a weak spot. He found it on January 8 just south of the highway where the 198th division was dug in. And on the 9th his division broke through. The bitterest fighting took place at Mikhailovskoye. By this time the weather was really cold in Russia. The temperature was ranging from 20 degrees below zero to 40 below. It was the time of the January frosts, too cold to snow, too cold for anyone but the man trained for winter warfare.

Some days later, after the capture of Mozhaïsk on January 20, I talked with General Govorov's best tank officer, Colonel Semeon Bogdanov, who in the Battle for Stalingrad was to command the 6th Mechanized Corps. He told me that in weather such as this a wounded man will die in ten or fifteen minutes unless stretcher-bearers can get to him with heavy blankets and a drink of vodka containing morphine. The wound freezes up.

The six German divisions on the line that Govorov cracked covered a front twenty-five miles wide, slightly more than four miles to a division as compared with the 1,200 to 1,800 yards guarded by a British division on the western front during the First World War. But in Russia the battle line was so wide that there really was no battle line, not trench warfare in the sense that it was understood in France twenty-five years ago. The best any general could do in Russia was to protect the highways and by-roads, fortify the villages and organize flying columns to aid the weak places in his defense.

Govorov used an interesting method to create his breakthrough. Being an artillery general, and a man who had helped to break the Mannerheim Line in Finland, he relied on artillery, and in this was helped by the fact that the Russians use a 46-millimeter gun (the barrel is only 1.8 inches in diameter) as compared with the 75-mm, or 3-inch gun that is the lightest field artillery piece in most armies. Govorov forced the German positions with artillery wedges, in which his light guns went forward with the infantry, often with only a light infantry force screening them.

Govorov advanced twenty-five miles in the eleven days after the start of his drive and on January 20 he captured Mozhaisk which had been lost to the oncoming Nazis in mid-October. In this advance he was aided by two divisions of General Dovator's cavalry corps which had left General Rokossovsky's army at the capture of Volokolomsk and turned south. This force made a seventy-five-mile night march to strike the Germans in the rear; then it pulled out and turned north again.

It was not until two days after the capture of Moz-

haisk that the correspondents had their first chance to visit this sector. Mozhaisk, they found, had fallen with only a few shots having been fired. The houses were not much damaged and only a few of the buildings. In one little place we talked to General Govorov for several hours. He told us that the snows were so deep that it was becoming impossible to use tank formations and as a result the Germans had sent some of their armored columns back to Germany, splitting the remainder up into smaller units to operate with infantry divisions.

We went on then a few miles along the Smolensk road to Borodino, scene of the great battle in 1812 when Napoleon and the Russian General Mikhail Kutuzov slugged it out for one long day, at the end of which both armies were exhausted. Napoleon managed to drag along into Moscow. Kutuzov had been forced to withdraw in order to fight another day. But Napoleon after Borodino was never again able to give much of a battle on Russian soil.

The Germans never even sought a battle here. They were on the run by the time Govorov reached Mozhaisk and they retreated as fast as they could, fearing a flanking column which the Russian commander had sent to the south. They pulled back after that, leaving strong rearguards, but the rearguards did little more than wait long enough to destroy the Russian villages they were left to hold. We saw what they did to Uvarovo where no battle took place. When we arrived it was a smoking ruin. Not a house or building was standing, only charred chimneys that stood where homes had been.

In Mozhaisk we found that all the large buildings had been turned into hospitals by the Red Army, and I

thought as I saw the ambulances coming in of the passage in the book by General de Caulaincourt, "With Napoleon in Russia." "Mozhaisk," he wrote on the day after Napoleon's fight at Borodino 129 years before, "was nothing but a vast hospital. Generals, officers and privates, all arrived there seeking help which none could give." It was not so in 1941. The wounded soldiers who arrived in Mozhaisk got help, the best the army could give them.

After Uvarovo Govorov's army ran into strong previously prepared positions before Gzhatsk. They tried to outflank them, failed, tried to take them by frontal assault, failed, and after that they gave up the attempt. Ghatsk and Vyasma just beyond were not to fall to Russian arms until the following December.

By this time General Zhukov had carried out a maneuver which it was to take some time for the Germans to understand.

On his right flank his four armies in their westward march converged to such a point that he was able to pull Rokossovsky's army out of the line and send it south behind Govorov's army to help General Boldin's army that had swept all the way from Tula south of Moscow to Kaluga south of Mozhaisk. From then on Rokossovsky and a small part of Dovator's cavalry corps were operating with the southern group.

SOUTHERN GROUP

I have never been able to determine exactly what happened south of Moscow in the first three or four days of the offensive. Boldin's army was somewhere in between Moscow and Tula, and he still held Tula although his

forces there had been cut off by General Guderian's tank force. General Belov's cavalry corps was on Boldin's left, covering Kashira and the approach to Moscow from the southeast. Beyond Belov and to Belov's left was the army of General Golikov, covering the approaches to Ryazan, which is a long way south and east of the capital.

Golikov's army on the far flank entered the battle late, but quickly captured Mikhailov and Epifan in one huge lunge southwest from Ryazan. He cut to pieces the 18th tank and the 10th motorized divisions.

Belov's corps entered the battle early, since he was operating in the center and at the same time in a position to hit Guderian's flank. At the end of November he called his unit commanders to his dugout. It was 8 p.m.

"The battle will be violent but the enemy must be smashed," Belov said. "The idea is to smash the 29th division with our main blow on the left flank and to pin down the other forces with a light blow on our right. Surprise and timing are necessary. The jumping-off line must be occupied on time, minute to minute, and camouflaged carefully. In any case don't give yourselves away. Take all precautionary measures. Muffle the horses hooves with straw and rags.

"The enemy is active. We have to be ready for anything. That is why it is important to entrench, immediately entrench. If the enemy gets the jump on us with the offensive, he must run into fortified lines that have a well-planned and powerful fire system. Courage, courage and once again courage. That is our principle. Don't be afraid of risks. Without risks we cannot conquer. Attack quickly even if it is risky. The scales can tip to

one side then to the other. The enemy may filter through and weak-nerved men can become scared. We have to beat the enemy even if he is in our rear.

"The offensive begins at 10:20 a.m. Check your watches by mine. Now it is 21:12 p.m. Make sure that the watches throughout the division check with mine. Remember we attack at 10:20."

Facing General Belov's corps then were the 29th motorized and 167th infantry divisions, backed by the 17th tank division. The rest of Guderian's 2d tank army had turned west to cut the Moscow-Tula road and was battling with General Boldin's army.

Belov began first with a tank-artillery attack supported by dismounted cavalry. The first day there was no decision but by evening a large force of sub-machine-gunners he had sent through the woods to the German rear had reached and captured the town of Piatnitsa. The following morning a tank force traveling through a country lane reached the village of Barabanovo on the highway further south of Piatnitsa. Then the Germans grew nervous, with their main line of communications to the south cut in two places. They began to waver. Belov pressed on, and the Germans began to hurry back. Mordves was occupied, then Veniev and Stalinogorsk.

Meanwhile, General Boldin was striking back to Belov's right. On the night of December 4 he got the bulk of his reserves from Zhukov and immediately began organizing mobile striking forces of sub-machine-gunners, artillery and tanks. They started the following day to operate over a wide front. In the early days the operations looked small. One Russian group destroyed a battalion of German infantry and a number of tanks

and motorcycles in the village of Torkhovo. Then another group wiped out the 5th battalion of an SS regiment at Kolodeznaya. The same night another battalion of this force was exterminated. Then Boldin attacked all along the line. One of the German tank divisions was caught between his regiments and another of Belov's on the left. Maslovo was captured. Soon the night fighting grew in intensity and long-range Russian artillery opened fire on German tanks in the occupied villages.

On the night of December 7 the Russian radio intercepted messages exchanged between the staff of the 3d tank division and Guderian's headquarters. Guderian answered: "Burn the machines and retreat to the southeast."

"So," wrote General Boldin later, "the Germans began to destroy motorcycles, tanks and guns and lorries. In the districts of Rudniovo, Kriukovo and Tieplovo (northeast of Tula) they burned 200 lorries, abandoned guns, machine guns, tractors and munitions. At Revia-kino they abandoned sixteen disabled tanks. At another place they left 100 trucks, several tanks, buses and a storehouse of ammunition. They hoped by moving to the southeast to get away and by-pass Tula the way they had come, but the line of retreat was blocked. In one place the Germans chalked red stars on the turrets of their tanks, hoping to be allowed to get away. In another place we found eighty German infantrymen dressed as Russian soldiers and trying to make their way out."

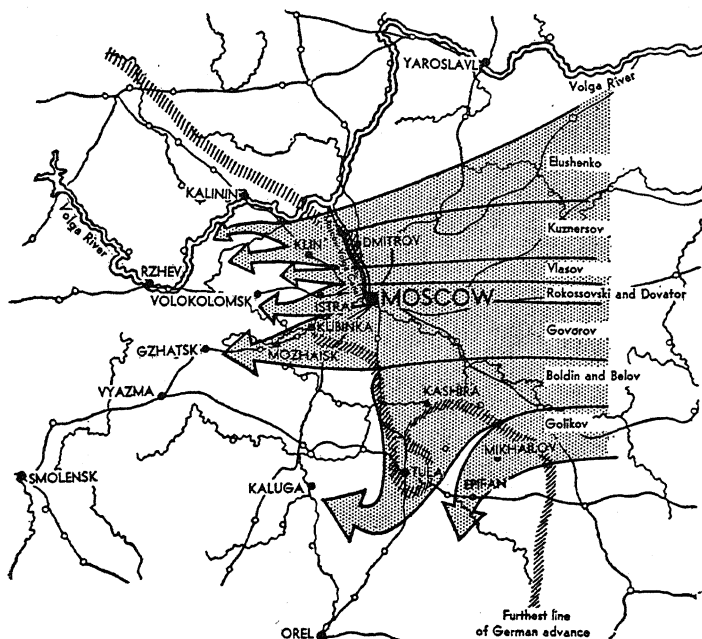
Soon the Germans who were not destroyed had pulled back and southwest of Tula. Some took the road to

Orel which leads to the south. The Russians attacked them at their fortified positions, creating the impression that it was there Boldin would strike hardest. But Zhukov had his eye on Kaluga sixty miles northwest of Tula. He sent Boldin's main force along country lanes in a roundabout hike that covered twenty miles a day for four days. The Russians reached the outskirts on December 20. Kaluga fell after a ten-day battle.

Boldin's army was ready for a rest after the fall of Kaluga, but it moved out and captured a number of important towns before General Rokossovsky's 16th Army came down from the north to take over and move in for the capture of Sukhinichi about sixty miles southwest of Kaluga.

The January frosts were heavy, and the main fighting left was for Govorov in the center but that ended soon after his forces got to the German defensive line before Ghatsk. From then on there was not much fighting on the Moscow front. In the north Generals Lelushenko and Kuznetsov approached Rzhev but were stopped before they could take this important city. The only action in February was the dash the Russians made south of the Smolensk highway that ended with the capture of Dorogobuzh. But they couldn't hold this outpost close to Smolensk, and with the summer thaws that began in early March they pulled out to straighten their line.

It was a tired Red Army when the snows began to go, but von Bock's and von Kluge's army of fifty-one divisions had suffered the defeat of their lives. New divisions that the German High Command had intended for the summer offensive were thrown in to hold. The flower



THE BATTLE FOR MOSCOW — IV

Arrows show main directions of Russian counter-offensive December 1941.

of the German armored forces had been cut down. How great a defeat they suffered would not be realized until the following fall when the Germans showed they did not have the strength to take Stalingrad. Not only could they not take Stalingrad but they were to lose the Sixth Army that they sent to do the job and ultimately be forced back far behind their jumping-off line.

During the Battle for Moscow they had suffered defeats in the far north around Tikhvin east of Leningrad, at Kalinin on the Moscow-Leningrad highway, and at

Rostov in the far south. They had not been able to take Leningrad. Never again would this German army be strong enough to attack in more than one large sector at a time. The following summer it was not all Russia they were attacking, but only southern Russia.

CHAPTER 7

The Cavalry

IT is not an uncommon sight on the plains of central Russia to see some afternoon about sundown a troop of cavalry riding two-abreast down a dusty highway, with the black-caped soldiers singing the songs of the steppe country. They ride with long stirrups, far up in the saddle. Ahead of them is an outrider and when he appears over the brow of a hill the peasants in the fields look up to watch, for there are few sights that thrill a Russian more than the sight of Russian cavalry.

It has not always been so. There was a time more than thirty years ago when the arrival of the Cossacks of the Czar frightened the children and worried their mothers and fathers. In those days cavalymen often were used as punitive detachments to put down local uprisings, and grandmothers telling the children about them during the long winter evenings seldom allowed the facts to spoil their stories. Nevertheless, for generation after generation they were considered the finest fighting men the Russians had. Down in their own Cossack country along the banks of the River Don, in the valley of the Kuban and on other outposts of the old empire their women and children looked on them with pride. They were good fathers and good farmers in time of peace. In time of war they were killers, trained from

boyhood to ride, trained from boyhood to shoot and use the sabre.

Over the years the Cossacks developed their own uniforms and their own fascinating brand of horsemanship, both of which have become famous all over the world. When they were called to the wars, they left the fields, mounted their own horses, and bringing their own arms they reported for duty within a few hours. They wore high boots and black caracul hats. Their cloaks were long and flowing, tied tightly at the waist, and over each breast were nine little pockets called "gaziri" in which they stuffed their bullets. Over their shoulders they threw a combination scarf and hood which they called a "bashlik." If they were Cossacks from the Don this bashlik was light gray. If they came from the steppe country of the Urals the bashlik was light blue. Let every man know where the Cossack comes from. And over all this the cavalryman wore a heavy black cape of unfinished felt, called a "burka," that fell down to his ankles. The Cossack adopted this cape from the men who live in the cool mountains of the Caucasus. They could sleep in it on the ground and in winter it left the sword arm free for action.

When the revolution broke out in 1917 it was joined by many obscure Cossacks who rose to great heights under the Bolsheviks. One was Marshal Budenny, a non-commissioned officer under the Czar. Another was Army General Josef Apanasenko, first a private then a corporal under the Czar, now commander of the Far Eastern Front that guards the frontier with Japan. But the great majority of the Cossacks cared little for the revolution, and they fought against it as so beautifully

described by Mikhail Sholokov, the Soviet Union's greatest living writer.

The fact is that the Cossacks, especially those who lived along the Don, cared little for the new world that the revolutionaries proposed. They already owned their own farms. They already had more freedom than most Russians. The Czar's bitter war on the Eastern Front was over and all they wanted to do was to return to their own homes and rebuild their lives in peace. But Civil War came. The Cossacks found themselves on the side of the Whites and since the Whites were destined to lose to the Reds, so were the Cossacks destined to lose. They fought back for many months. In the end they were broken.

It resulted from all this that the Cossacks were not in high favor with the revolutionaries for many years to come. Consequently, though they were mobilized into the Red Army as individuals they were not allowed to come in their own detachments; nor were they allowed to wear their own uniforms and maintain their old traditions. In those years Moscow took strong measures to exterminate the Cossacks as an entity. It hoped to blend them in with other Russians. But the task was hopeless. Tradition was too strong. And so it came about that some fifteen years after the establishment of the Soviet state, permission was given for the Cossacks once again to fight as Cossacks. Cossack regiments and divisions were organized. They put on their Cossack uniforms. When war came with Nazi Germany they were ready to fight, and many of them went into battle wearing decorations they had won under the Czar.

It must not be supposed that all cavalrymen are Cos-

sacks. They are not. I do not know what the proportion is but I should guess not more than fifty-fifty. But all cavalrymen are trained the same way and equipped the same way. They use the same tactics and live the same sort of lives. In short it is not easy to tell whether a cavalryman is a Cossack unless the soldier is wearing the colored "bashlik" of his region, unless he is singing one of the wild songs of his homeland or unless he happens to be one of those unquestionable Cossack types with the swarthy complexion and long proud mustaches.

Cavalry does play an important role in the Red Army though not perhaps as important a part as many observers believe. Undoubtedly, it is the largest cavalry force in the world but most Russian generals will tell you that they would prefer an armored division to a cavalry division and that their relatively wide use of cavalry resulted primarily from inadequate tank and armored car production. But since the Red Army did not have all the tanks it wanted, it used cavalry, particularly in the first year of the war, and it used cavalry intelligently and successfully. In the Red Army it is used differently than in most armies. The Russians believe that horsemen should be employed in great masses, in corps of two, three or four divisions and that they should be employed as a tactical unit, unhampered by cooperation with infantry. Furthermore, they believe that cavalry should be horse cavalry and not a strange mixture of horses, trucks, armored cars and tanks.

When the Russian cavalry corps goes into action, it has a definite hit-and-run mission and for the accomplishment of this mission the corps commander is given the use of one or two tank brigades and a number of air

force squadrons. He wants no trucks. He wants no motorized artillery. He wants nothing that in any way may hamper his mobility, for mobility in his opinion is about the only advantage he has over infantry. His corps may have to go where only a horse can go. What then if his artillery is motorized and the trucks cannot cross the snow-filled ravines? And trucks mean gasoline and gasoline complicates the system of supply, whereas his horsemen will carry their own food and wagons will bring up ammunition for the guns and fodder for the animals.

In Russia I talked to many Russian cavalry officers. Their idea of a perfect cavalryman was the American civil war fighter, General J. E. B. Stuart. They know of his raid around McClellan's army in 1862 and of his raid into Pennsylvania later in the year. They have studied his methods. When you talk to them of modern cavalry in other armies, with its motorized artillery and hundreds of trucks, they will tell you to study Stuart.

In the German war there were many examples of Russian Cavalry corps meeting and defeating enemy tank and infantry divisions, but there were many other instances when the Germans won the day. Still, cavalry had its advantages for the peculiar Russian terrain and after the first nine months of warfare the Germans too began to use large cavalry formations.

A Russian general will tell you that where cavalry was successful, it succeeded because it was used in units as large as a corps, and where it was defeated, it lost because it was employed in smaller detachments.

The great leader of Russian cavalry thought is Marshal Budenny, the Czar's non-commissioned officer who

after the revolution organized the Bolshevik's First Cavalry Army, a force that swept throughout the country defeating the counter-revolutionaries first in one sector then in another. In this army were many soldiers who have risen to high rank in the Red Army. Marshal Voroshilov was one of its commanders. Marshal Timoshenko commanded for a time its 6th Chongar Division. So did Army General Apanasenko and Colonel General Oka Gorodovikov, now Inspector General of all Russian cavalry. Colonel General E. A. Shchadenko, chief of all Red Army commissars, was a member of this army's three-man military council along with Budenny and Voroshilov. Marshal Zhukov was in this First Cavalry Army. So were Colonel General Andrei Eremenko, commander of the Stalingrad Front; Army General Ivan Tulenev, commander of the Trans-Caucasus Front; Army General Gregori Kovalev, commander of the Trans-Baikal Front that guards part of the Manchukuo border; and Lieutenant General Dmitri Lelushenko, who commanded one of the seven armies that won the Battle for Moscow. Cavalrymen have always been the great leaders of the Red Army. Perhaps that explains something about their military thought. For years after the civil war the chief of all cavalry was Budenny, the fierce-looking officer with the long mustaches, and he was succeeded by Gorodovikov whose mustaches were just as fantastic.

Gorodovikov still holds the job. His assistant is Major General Viktor Obukov, another veteran of the First Cavalry, forty-one years old, whose shaved head and tight lips give him a hard look when he is angry and a harmless look when he smiles. I have talked to Obukov

on several occasions. Like all cavalrymen he thinks that cavalry is just about the finest thing in the world. Some day I would like to see him in an argument with General Malinovsky, who told the correspondents one afternoon: "Cavalry is a very handsome part of the army, but in the present war it plays an ineffective role. The explanation is that the horse cannot compete with the motor. If we had had more trucks we would have used less cavalry."

Obukov thinks otherwise and he can recall some battles to prove his point. Early in the war Lieutenant General Pavel A. Belov's cavalry corps, operating near Stepovka in the Ukraine, met the German 9th Tank Division and the German 25th Motorized Division after the enemy column had broken through the Russian lines. Belov's horsemen dismounted after a long ride that placed them on the German flank. At dawn they attacked and by nightfall the tank and motorized divisions were routed enough to give the Soviet High Command time to straighten its line. Only a few weeks before this corps in retreat had met a German motorized force on the march. It attacked immediately, capturing the village of Balta. Then it swung around to the north and came in behind the enemy, so routing the German 19th Motorized Division and 293d and 297th Infantry Divisions.

For examples of cavalry operating over a long period of time in the enemy rear, Soviet officers look to Colonel, later Major General, Lev Dovator's cavalry corps. From August 14 to 23 a Cossack group commanded by this young soldier engaged in a series of skirmishes with the Germans in an endeavor to find a vulnerable spot in

their line. Dismounting, they launched a bayonet attack, cut up the 3d battalion of the 43d infantry regiment, broke through and stayed behind the enemy for two weeks. Throughout this period they worked in small groups, but in close coordination, with the result that the enemy believed them to be isolated bands.

There is one good illustration of the use of cavalry on the defense. General Obukov told me that on the fifth and sixth days of the war the cavalry corps commanded by Major General V. D. Kruchenkin held the River Ikva close to the frontier against repeated attacks by the German 11th Tank Division. It was dismounted action, of course, but it illustrates the firepower of a Russian corps.

In the fifth month of the war the Russian command began to give the title of guards to units that had distinguished themselves in battle. The early honors went to General Belov's force which became the 1st Guards Cavalry Corps and to General Dovator's unit which became the 2d Guards Cavalry Corps. Both fought well in the Battle for Moscow during which Dovator himself was killed. His body was cremated and the ashes placed in an urn in the Moscow Crematory. Today he is recalled as one of the outstanding heroes of the war.

Lev Dovator was only thirty-eight years old when the Germans invaded Russia. He was born in the village of Khotino near Vitebsk in White Russia. As a boy he joined the Young Communist League and became the secretary of his village organization but in 1921 he went to Minsk where he entered an institute with the idea of becoming a school teacher. When he ran out of money he joined a cavalry unit stationed at Minsk and there-

after he was always in the army. After a time he was sent to Leningrad where he entered a cavalry school. His wife accompanied him and went to work in the Skoro Khod shoe factory. Dovator was graduated with a commission in 1929 and after service with troops in the village of Yaroslavskaya he was sent to the Far East as a political worker. Then he returned to Central Russia and entered the Frunze Military Academy in Moscow. He got out in 1939, trained to command large formations of cavalry. Dovator was a colonel when the war began but he was promoted to major general after his two-weeks raid in the German rear that harassed enemy communications in mid-August. For the operation he got the Order of the Red Banner. In early November he won the Order of Lenin. His corps was with General Rokossovsky's army in the Battle for Moscow but one afternoon (it was on December 19) near the village of Palashkino on the River Ruza he was killed by a mine explosion. Two days later he got his second Order of Lenin and the title Hero of the Soviet Union.

Some six months later the correspondents visited this cavalry corps while it was in reserve west of Moscow and we soon found out how much the officers of his staff thought of him as a man. While we were there the corps commander was a short, fat little Major General, Vladimir Krukov. At a luncheon Henry Cassidy of the Associated Press and I sat near a group of Dovator's old comrades. When a young political commissar during an impassioned toast said that Dovator's men would follow Krukov to even greater glory than they had followed Dovator, Cassidy and I heard low growls of disapproval on all sides. But that seemed to be just a little

display of temperament for Krukov himself was a good officer. Like many other cavalry commanders he had served with Budenny during the civil war. Before the Nazi invasion he commanded the Soviet garrison at Hango Peninsula on the coast of Finland and in the early fighting in 1941 he had led a motorized division that operated behind German lines in the Tikhvin-Volkhov sector of the Leningrad Front.

Besides these two cavalry corps four others earned the title of guards in the first two years of the war. Major General Kruchenkin's outfit became the 3d Guards Cavalry Corps. Lieutenant General Nikolai Kirichenko led the 4th. I never did find out who commanded the 5th but the 6th was led by Major General Sergei Sokolov.

At the end of the first nine months of the war the Russians altered somewhat the training and equipment of their cavalry forces. During the fall and winter they had found out that the airplane and the tank were the horsemen's greatest enemies, primarily because of the difficulties involved in screening the movements of large mounted detachments. In the spring of 1942 the Inspector General's office issued new instructions. The number of anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns was doubled in every regiment and the squadrons were reorganized. One afternoon I saw the new formations on battle maneuvers. Now to every squadron was assigned one 45-millimeter gun or one 76-millimeter gun (1.8 or 3-inch guns) so that at all times the squadron of perhaps a hundred horsemen had field artillery for anti-tank fire. Now too there was also a liberal number of 20-millimeter anti-tank rifles in every squadron, for anti-aircraft as well as

anti-tank fire. Whenever a rocket signaled the approach of enemy machines, the horses were removed from the field and the field gun was wheeled into position. Anti-tank riflemen were scattered about the gun and sub-machine-gunners were spread about to protect the anti-tank riflemen and the gun from enemy infantry infiltration.

These anti-tank rifles were crude-looking weapons, really nothing much more than large single-shot rifles. They were introduced after the start of the war. I remember one day while visiting the front during the Battle for Moscow Larry Lesueur of the Columbia Broadcasting System and I saw one of them leaning against a tree. There was a lot of damaged German equipment about but we could not see any soldiers so we concluded it was a German trophy.

Larry and I were great trophy-hunters so we decided to take the rifle back to the Metropole in Moscow. We were carrying it back to our car when about six tough-looking Russians came out of the woods. We soon got the idea that they were asking us where we thought we were going with their gun. Trophy-hunting was a pastime on front trips, but I think Lesueur and I worked harder at it than any one else. Henry Cassidy of the Associated Press said one afternoon he would not be astonished if we came back to Moscow with a howitzer attached to our car. On the Borodino battlefield we looked through a museum of the Napoleonic war that had been destroyed by the Nazis. I got an old Russian bayonet of 1812 and our conducting officer found an old cannon ball. Lesueur came out with what he said was the bolt from an old rifle, but it was not long before we

remembered that bolt-action rifles had not been invented in 1812 and that the trophy he had was probably just the bolt from the door.

During the maneuvers we saw that besides its own field gun every squadron had small 50-millimeter and the medium 82-millimeter mortars. The Red Army was short of mortars when the invasion started but the government organized a special People's Commissariat for Mortar Construction and within six months it had greatly increased production. The army also took advantage of captured German mortars and by inserting a 1-millimeter tube into its own 82-millimeter weapons it was able to fire German 81-millimeter mortar bombs.

Russian cavalrymen told us that the best horse they had was a medium-size Anglo-Don breed, but the majority of animals were small Russian steppe horses capable of long marches under difficult conditions. In winter training squadrons marched eighteen to forty-five miles a day and in summer they sometimes covered seventy miles. They also went on 10-mile marches with every man and animal wearing a gas mask and with the horses wearing special stockings to protect their feet from mustard gas. In Moscow during the winter of 1942 I visited a Russian cavalry regiment in training. It had never been to the front, having been organized only six months before, but 80 per cent of its officers had seen action the previous summer and the training was based on the latest battle experience. In this regiment the heavy machine guns were transported on fast little wagons drawn by four horses, called by the Russians "tachankas."

All Russians told me that the sabre charge was not a

thing of the past although, of course, it could be used only under certain conditions. At the end of 1941 Dovator's cavalry corps operating with Rokossovsky's army west of Moscow charged into a German division one moonlit night and destroyed an entire regiment, killing 2,000 officers and men. In that action Dovator's men captured more than 300 vehicles, 100 cannon and many machine guns and other weapons. It was said that after they routed the headquarters of the regiment panic spread and the rumor went around that 100,000 Cossacks had broken through the line. They were Cossacks all right, but there were not 100,000 of them.

CHAPTER 8

The Infantry

FOR success in their invasion of the Soviet Union the Germans relied primarily on the striking power of their armored and motorized divisions and on their air force, the two arms of the service in which they really had superiority. The Russians, in defense and counter-attack against these highly mobile forces, relied on their infantry and artillery, the two arms of the service in which they excelled. The war then was a contest between these opposing units. The Germans enjoyed the advantage of mobility, armor plate and concentrated fire power. The Russians were in a better position to profit by the terrain, the weather, the difficulties of supply in so large a country, night operations and, when they had time to assemble their guns, of firepower on the defense and heavy artillery barrage on the offense.

While the great battles were going on the Germans did what they could to improve their infantry and artillery and the Russians struggled to strengthen their air and mechanized forces. Both sides succeeded to some extent but the German Army was never able to equal Russian infantry and its failure to do so may have cost it the war. Disregarding the number of infantry divisions in

each army, I think the explanation can be found first in training, second in morale.

The Russians found throughout the war that the German infantryman fought well whenever his army had tank and air superiority on his sector. He was trained for that type of warfare, the warfare when the infantry goes in after the bombs and armored columns have blasted a path in the enemy lines. He fought that way in Poland, in Norway, in the Low Countries and France and later in the Balkans. He fought that way in the early months of the Soviet war. But when winter prevented the widespread use of tank divisions and chained aircraft to the fields or when the Germans lost tank superiority on any part of the front, the infantryman from Berlin hesitated and looked back. He felt something was wrong. This was not the fighting he had been told about on the training ground. He had not read very much about this in his military publications at home. He did not like it. He was nervous.

The Russian soldier on the other hand, though he had been trained to fight behind and with tanks and aircraft, was also trained to fight on his own. He wanted armored support as much as the German did but if necessary he could get along without it. He knew on the training ground that he would have to stand alone some day and battle with enemy tanks. He was taught to use a fuel bottle and a heavy anti-tank grenade. He was taught, if he was armed with one of these weapons, to lie concealed until the tank was twenty-five or thirty yards away and then to rise up and try to destroy it. He was taught, if he carried only a rifle, to lie still until the tank had passed.

The German too learned these things on the training fields of Germany, but over the years a psychological force was at work as he heard of armored support and worked with it in campaigns from one side of Europe to another. In time he grew to fear combat without tank and air protection. When I was down at Stalingrad a few days after the destruction of the German Sixth Army I heard of many examples when German infantry, operating without such protection, faltered on the field before murderous rifle, machine-gun and artillery fire. This was something new. This was not like the good old days when it stormed across the open steppe country behind tank divisions and powerful bombing aviation.

Just as this kind of training was a constant handicap to German infantry, so was the morale of the troops. It was not that the German did not think he was a better soldier than the Russian. I think he did. It was not that he lacked pride in his detachment. I think he had that too. But there were constantly operating factors over which he had no control and which the German High Command could do nothing about. They stemmed from one thing — that the German was fighting on foreign soil far from home while the Russian was defending his doorstep and everything that life meant to him. The Russian believed what he was told in Konstantin Simonov's poem:


If you don't want to surrender
To the black-hearted German
Your home, your wife and your mother,
Everything that we call the Fatherland,

Know this: That no one saves them
If you do not save them.
Know this: That no one kills him
If you do not kill him.

The most that any German soldier could believe was that in invading the Soviet Union he was fighting a preventive war, to prevent at some time in the doubtful future the invasion of his own country. The Russian, on the other hand, knew that his country had been attacked by a treacherous invader, that the enemy had ignored a pact of friendship and non-aggression, that he had swept across the frontier at dawn to lay waste Russian homes and villages, to kill men, women and children. There were only two things he could do: accept immediate slavery or fight back. He fought back. Stalin has said that at first some Russians fought back half-heartedly. They did not want war. They had not asked for it. Like all men they would have preferred to go home, back to their families or their jobs. But as the first days passed, as men died and homes were burned and civilians suffered, the Russians learned to hate with a hatred that brought tears of anger to their eyes. Said Stalin in the fifth month of the war:

"The German robbers want a war of extermination with the peoples of the U.S.S.R. Well, if the Germans want a war of extermination, they will get it."

And they began to get it. They got it before Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Odessa, Sevastopol and Stalingrad. They got it up and down the line in street fighting, battles in the woods, on snow-covered fields, for every height, for every ravine. Often the German Army was

able to bring more firepower to bear on the vital sector. And often the Russians were forced to retreat. But always the Russian infantry fought back with a courage and a will that wore down the enemy. The Germans never understood exactly why. They were continually baffled by the fact. It irritated them. Why would the Russians not surrender when they were hopelessly surrounded and outnumbered? Why would they fight to the last man? Were they too stupid to understand that their only hope for life was to throw down their arms and raise their hands? "Swamp animals," Hitler called them. 

Of course, it is true that the Germans did capture hundreds of thousands of them. Russians are not supermen. There were some who laid down their arms. There were others who fought until their supply of ammunition was exhausted and then surrendered. But the majority fought on until death and many fought their way out of encirclement. Lieutenant General I. V. Boldin's army was in the German rear for forty-five days in the early months of the war. It escaped and was able to participate in the counter-offensive that saved Moscow.

But other armies failed to escape and were annihilated. One was cut down in the first week of the war between Bialystok and Minsk. An American officer, Lieutenant Colonel Paul W. Thompson, writing in the "Infantry Journal," quoted the commentary of a leading Nazi military analyst, Colonel Soldan, who wrote:

"The difference between the Russian of Tannenberg (1914) and the Russian of Bialystok and Minsk (1941) is that the former surrendered when surrounded while the latter fought to the bitter end. It is not like the cam-

paign in Poland or in France. In completely hopeless situations the Russian continues to carry the fight to us. Only a trifling few Russians ever lay down their arms and surrender honorably (and sensibly); the great mass of them choose to fight it out."

If Colonel Soldan previously judged the Russians by the Battle of Tannenberg, he made a great mistake for the evidence of history was against him. He might have studied the commentaries of French generals on their campaign into Russia in 1812. Napoleon found that Russians were not afraid to die. One of his officers wrote of the bloody battlefield after Borodino: "French soldiers are not easily deceived; they were astonished to find so many of the enemy killed, so great a number of wounded and so few prisoners, there being not eight hundred of the latter. The dead bodies were rather a proof of the courage of the vanquished, than the evidence of victory."

Colonel Soldan might also have studied the history of the war on the eastern front in 1914-17 for then, except in the fighting around Tannenberg, the Russians fought and fought well. He might have talked to the Finns about their war with the Russians in the winter of 1939-40. I was four months with the Finnish Army at that time and I never met a Finnish soldier who did not say the same thing, that Russians as a rule kept on fighting even when their position was hopeless. But the Finns explained it as the French and later the Germans explained it. They thought that the Russian continued to fight because he was afraid not to fight, because he did not have the imagination to surrender, because he was a barbarian at heart. Some day perhaps they will

learn that Russians fight for the same reason that other men fight, because they love their homes, love their families, want to rule themselves in their own way, because they have been trained to fight and disciplined to fight.

The Russian soldier hated the German invader. From this hatred came courage and the will to fight, and from these two characteristics, coupled with training, discipline and equipment, came the superiority of Russian infantry over German infantry.

In Moscow, more from guesswork than information, we used to estimate that the Russians had about 350 infantry divisions totaling about 5,000,000 men. Perhaps no more than 250 divisions were in the field at any one time. It is possible that no more than 150 of them were mobilized when the Germans invaded with 170 divisions.

As the war developed both armies introduced more divisions into the field. At the end of the first year the Germans, counting Finnish, Hungarian, Rumanian and Italian troops, are said to have had 240 divisions on the line. Russian infantry then was superior in numbers. So was Russian artillery. But the Russians, relatively weak in armored divisions and in the air, had to make up for this weakness in the courage and skill of their infantry and artillery. That is where their training and discipline proved decisive.

The Russian infantry division until a few years before the war consisted of about 13,000 men, organized into three infantry regiments, one artillery regiment and special troops. Then its numbers were increased to

17,200 as the army strengthened the firepower of the division by adding another artillery regiment and assigning more machine-gunners and riflemen to the infantry regiments. At the outbreak of the war the organization included three infantry regiments, two artillery regiments, a battalion of engineers, a tank battalion, a reconnaissance battalion, a signal battalion, an anti-aircraft group, an anti-tank group, special troops and a headquarters detachment.

During the war, however, the composition of the division was altered again. I began to hear of divisions numbering only 8,000 and 9,000 men and many of 12,000. The reason was that the high command removed one of the two artillery regiments and the anti-tank battalion in a move to centralize artillery under the control of the supreme general headquarters. Furthermore, the equipment of the division became less standardized than it had been in time of peace.

I think that as time passed the divisions began to vary in size and equipment. In some, whole battalions and regiments were equipped with the Degtyarev automatic rifle, similar in many respects to the American Garand. In other divisions the men carried the modernized Mossin-Nagant rifle that weighed slightly less than nine pounds. I have also seen a whole battalion equipped with the American-built Thompson submachine-gun. The division's equipment began to depend upon the terrain over which it was fighting and the conditions of battle. If it was heavily wooded country, there was a liberal sprinkling of men carrying the Russian submachine-gun, a light, short-barreled weapon with a

rapid rate of fire and short range. If it was open prairie country, there was a greater number of rifles and automatic rifles.

In all these divisions the Russians used sharpshooters probably on a larger scale than they are used in most armies. The men were picked from all over the country. Some were factory workers in the large cities who had won competitions in private life. Others were hunters from the Urals and distant Siberia. All of them were skilled marksmen. Sharpshooters were important men in their detachments. They were respected and relied upon. Often competitions were organized between the marksmen of one division and the marksmen of another, the idea being to see who could kill the most Germans before a specified day.

Few stories of the war excited the interest and imagination of the Russian people more than the stories told of these men. Some turned in incredible scores and the newspapers talked of sharpshooters who had killed as many as 250 and 350 of the enemy. Maybe they did, but there were skeptics who wondered. It is an old trick in all armies to raise dummies above the trench in the hope of drawing enemy fire. The sharpshooter sees one and pulls his trigger. Then another dummy is raised further along the trench. The marksman pulls his trigger a second time. After that it takes only a few minutes to plot the marksman's position and if he is not careful he is likely to be blown up by a mortar bomb or light shell just about the time he is cutting the second notch in his gun. But the sharpshooters contributed something to the strength of the infantry division and certainly many thousands of Germans were felled by bullets fired

from a half mile and more by a concealed soldier who had taken aim through a telescopic sight.

One thing about Russian infantry that before the war was not fully realized abroad is that every regiment was trained to believe in attack at all times, even in retreat. That is how the Russians fought. They attacked whenever circumstances permitted and often when it seemed that attack was impossible. Warfare like that required skillful command and courage. It was almost always costly, and I hate to think of the number of times Russian infantrymen have charged across open fields towards heavily defended positions.

If the Germans held their line, the dead would rot in the fields. If they were driven out, the Russian who died could expect only a small place in a mass grave, a long trench where he would be buried with his comrades. Whenever possible, the Germans buried their dead in single graves and marked the graves with the names of the men who had fallen. The Russians buried their dead in what they called "brotherly graves," but I do not believe that the thought of it held any terror for the Russian soldier, not because he wanted to die or because he did not care but simply because he had been trained to expect that he might die and trained to believe that it was an honor to be buried with his friends.

In the pit of his stomach then as he charged across an open field there was the hollow, sickening feeling that all men feel under such circumstances. Still, he kept on going. If it was wintertime and the temperature was far below freezing he knew he would be lucky to survive a serious wound, for a wounded man cannot expect to live long unless the stretcher-bearers get to him quick^{ly}.

wrap him in a heavy blanket and give him a shot of vodka doped with a little morphine. The vodka and morphine were administered to ease the shock.

Few foreign observers in Moscow had much of an opportunity to study the medical facilities of the Red Army for in the first two years none was allowed to visit a first-aid station at the front. We did believe from observation that their hospitals were good though often there was insufficient equipment, and a shortage of medicines.

Nevertheless, there were thousands of testimonials to the efficiency of the army's medical services in the numbers of men we saw on the streets of Moscow with red and yellow wound stripes on their right breasts.

The Russian soldier like soldiers everywhere likes to wear medals and other decorations, and in a lot of ways I think they meant more to the Russians. Their medals were large. Hundreds of thousands were awarded. If you saw a Russian soldier without a decoration of some kind on his left breast you could be sure that he had not seen much action. He was almost certain to have some sort of a medal if he was a member of one of the famous guards divisions. It was in the fifth month of the war that the Soviet Government revived the title of guards for units that distinguished themselves in battle. The custom originated in Russia with Peter the Great in the early part of the 18th Century and it was continued under the Czars until the time of the revolution. The Soviets discontinued the custom but Stalin brought it back and in a short time it became an important and solemn honor in the Red Army. When a regiment or division won the title of guards, its number and the

name of its commander were published in the press. There was an impressive ceremony when a new guards flag was presented, on one side of which was the number of the organization and on the other side a large portrait of Lenin. At the presentation every man of the detachment kneeled down and bared his head.

After two years of war eighty Soviet divisions were guards divisions. The men were called "guardsmen," instead of just "Redarmymen." The officers were called "Guards Captains," "Guards Colonels," and so on. And as a reward for having won the title the men of all guards organizations received double pay. The guards were the shock troops of Soviet Infantry. They were the troops the Russian civilians read about, the backbone of the Red Army.

CHAPTER 9

"Death or Insanity"

THERE were about five inches of snow on the ground in January of 1943 when the six Soviet armies of the Don Front, commanded by Colonel General Konstantin Rokossovsky, began their liquidation of the German Sixth Army that was surrounded inside and just west of the city of Stalingrad. The Russian ultimatum demanding surrender had been refused the night before. Early that morning German outposts had seen red rockets go up all along the Russian line. They were the signal for the artillery barrage and within a few seconds the guns had started firing.

About noontime Rokossovsky was standing in an observation post, talking to a member of his staff. Beside him was a slightly built, rather tall Russian officer who also wore the stars of a colonel general on his epaulets. The tall officer in his gray general's coat stared silently through field glasses, observing the effect of Russian gunfire. Then he turned to Rokossovsky.

"There are only two salvations from this hurricane of fire," he said. "Death or insanity."

There was another salvation — surrender. But the German commander took that only after the guns had ripped his defenses to bits and killed thousands of his men. Men who were on the Stalingrad line in those days

say that the barrage was a "hurricane of fire." Shells from all types of guns and howitzers in the Red Army whined over the white fields and exploded near pill-boxes, ammunition dumps, command posts, trenches and lines of supply.

The tall officer who had placed the guns and who was commanding the fire was Colonel General Nikolai Voronov, only forty-three years old, chief of all Red Army artillery. He was on the Don Front as the representative of supreme general headquarters. One week later he was to be promoted to the rank of Marshal of Artillery. The German Sixth Army was destroyed by artillery fire for it is doubtful whether the Russians ever had assembled as many guns for one battle as they did for the extermination of this surrounded German force. The cannon wrecked enemy tanks, destroyed brick buildings, ripped up barbed wire, exploded mine-fields. Then the infantry went in with submachine guns, hand grenades, automatic rifles and rifles, but with the infantry went light guns that blasted enemy positions with direct fire at short ranges of from 200 to 300 yards. In the forward dashes the light artillery was pulled by the gunners over the fields. At times they lined up four or five feet apart on a sector that extended for a half mile or more. This was Soviet artillery in action, the one arm of the service outside of the infantry in which the Russians claimed superiority over the Germans both in quantity and quality. At no time during the year and a half I was in Russia did I hear an officer or a soldier say that the Germans had as many or more guns than the Russians had. As for quality none thought that German guns were so well adapted for warfare in Russia. Artillery was one thing

that the Red Army had worked on for years and years before the war. It had the factories. It had the training schools. Its designers worked with the understanding that the guns would be used for the sort of fighting that must be expected in Russia.

It was well that it had concentrated on artillery for without artillery superiority the Russians could never have stood up against Germany's twin weapons of blitzkrieg, its armored divisions and powerful bombing aviation. As things turned out artillery was unable to compete in open country with tanks and planes but in wintertime or forest warfare or night battles it enabled the Red Army to hold its own and paved the way for the great counter-offensive before Moscow and Stalingrad. During the summer of 1942 the Russians could do nothing but retreat across the steppes before the mechanized German Army. But once they were fortified inside Stalingrad where the war ceased to be one of maneuver, artillery could be used as it should be used. In the defense of this Volga city they kept all their heavy guns on the far bank of the river. There they were safe from sudden tank raids. From the far bank they could hurl enough explosives into the German lines to prevent heavy troop concentration for the final assault.

Perhaps the greatest change in the Red Army during the war involved the centralization of control of field and medium artillery in the hands of the high command. The trend was apparent over a period of many months as the army strove to get mass concentration of fire. In 1941 there were two artillery regiments of thirty-six guns each in every infantry division. By 1943 the division had surrendered one of the artillery

regiments to the high command which then was able to organize entire artillery divisions and concentrate them at will up and down the front.

The headquarters of the Supreme Command also took control of most of the antitank battalions and organized them into tank destroyer regiments. The transfers weakened the firepower of the infantry divisions but an attempt was made to make up for the loss by sending mortar battalions and regiments to the infantry.

The Russian general, Leonid Govorov, who later became commander of the Leningrad Front, told correspondents one winter afternoon soon after he had captured Mozhaïsk west of Moscow that the German High Command in preparing for this war had made one great mistake. It had constructed enough tanks and planes. It had enough infantry, engineers and other troops. It also had a lot of heavy and medium artillery. But Govorov said the Germans had believed they could replace light artillery with mortars. The theory was wrong as they found out during the invasion.

Modern armies use guns for relatively flat-trajectory fire and howitzers for high-angle fire. Both are breech-loading but the gun can be distinguished from the howitzer by the greater length of its barrel. Modern armies also use trench mortars that fire bombs rather than shells. Mortars are muzzle-loading, useful for short-range fire. As a rule they are light and easy to handle. According to Govorov, the Germans concentrated on the construction of mortars, believing it unnecessary to furnish their troops with light guns and howitzers. As things turned out mortars could do the work of artillery at short range, but the Germans found they were

handicapped by a shortage of longer-range light artillery. After the first three months of the invasion they saw their mistake and 3-inch guns from all over Europe were collected and sent into Russia. They never, however, were able to overcome their deficiency.

The Russians, on the other hand, found that they had made just the opposite mistake. When the war began they had plenty of heavy, medium and light artillery. What they suffered from was a shortage of mortars, also the result of an error of judgment, and so in the third month of the war they worked overtime to build mortars. For this purpose the Soviet Government created a Peoples Commissariat of Mortar Construction whose assignment it was to see that the Red Army got mortars and got them quickly. That was about the same thing as if in this country or Great Britain a cabinet post were created with the man in charge being called Secretary of Mortars.

The war then continued with the Germans trying to improve their light artillery and the Russians working to build more mortars. Both armies were successful but on the whole the Germans never were able to put more guns in the field than the Russians could. I believe the same is true for anti-tank artillery and anti-aircraft artillery. In anti-aircraft the Red Army was all right from the start. It could cover every part of the front; nor did it have enough guns to protect all of its important targets. But the vital targets were adequately covered. In Moscow there were many British officers and men who had been in London during the German bombings that followed the Battle of Britain. They all agreed that London never was able to put up anything like the barrage

that was thrown up over Moscow. As the war continued both the Germans and the Russians discovered, however, that they did not have enough anti-tank and anti-aircraft artillery. It was almost impossible to get too much. Both armies sent more equipment to their divisions. In some branches of the service, for example, the cavalry, the Russians doubled their anti-tank and anti-aircraft strength during the war.

The man who was most responsible for Russian artillery strength and skill was the colonel general who served with Rokossovsky on the Don Front before Stalingrad. Colonel General (later Marshal of Artillery) Voronov was an artilleryman all his life. Like most other high-ranking Russian officers he had entered the Red Army soon after it was organized in 1918. Then he was eighteen years old and his rank was the lowest there is, just a private.

After the war he was sent to a new artillery school that the Soviets had organized in Leningrad. He was in its first graduating class and came out with his commission as a junior lieutenant. After service with troops Voronov attended an artillery school for higher ranking officers. Later he became the commandant of the First Leningrad Artillery School which was founded to replace the school he had attended as a cadet. Then Voronov served for three years as commander of an artillery regiment. He held several other posts and in 1937 when he was barely thirty-eight years old he was made chief of artillery of the Red Army. Russian officers have told me that it was from the time he was appointed chief of artillery that this branch of the army began to develop into the formidable force it was during the German in-

vasion. The entire system of artillery training was worked out under his supervision. New artillery schools were organized in various parts of the country. Voronov then was chief of artillery during the Finnish campaign that ended after the Russians primarily with gunfire cracked the southern part of the Mannerheim Line on the Karelian Isthmus. There is an American correspondent who can testify to the effect of that fire.

During the Finnish war I left Helsinki, the Finnish capital, to visit the Mannerheim Line on New Year's Day. After an overnight stop at Viipuri on the Isthmus we drove down the line and after a mile-or-so walk through the woods we stopped to talk with the men of one Finnish regiment. They were tired-looking men who had passed a sleepless night and they were not glad to see me coming. They told me why.

The night before another American had visited their sector. He was Warren Irvin, of the National Broadcasting Company, an alert correspondent who had conceived the idea of a New Year's Eve broadcast from the Mannerheim Line. He persuaded the Finnish press department to make the arrangements. Then he showed up with his equipment, trying to think of some way to make his broadcast effective. He got the idea all right, and he sold it. His thought was to have Finnish guns provide sound effects as a background for his talk. The Finns agreed, and at the pre-arranged time Finnish artillerymen opened fire. There was little sense in wasting shells so they fired them toward the Russian lines.

That happened to have been a quiet day along the front when the Russians were not attacking, and when they were not attacking there was little activity because

the Finns lacked the equipment and manpower to start something themselves. But on this night the Russians suddenly found the Finns firing without any apparent objective. They thought the Finns must have received reinforcements, that they must be planning an offensive. Immediately they opened fire with everything they had. They fired all up and down the sector from which Irvin was broadcasting. Shells exploded all over the woods and the heaviest fire was directed at the pathways which the Russians knew the Finns used behind their fortified line. Irvin threw himself down in the snow. The Finns stopped firing and scattered. And the Russians fired for twenty minutes before Irvin and the Finns dared come up for air. After that the Finns ruled there would be no more sound effects from the Mannerheim Line.

Voronov remained as chief of artillery in the period of reorganization of the Red Army that followed the Finnish war. By the time of the German invasion his chief assistant was a thin, gray-haired soldier, Lieutenant General Viktor Tikhonov.

General Tikhonov showed us something of Soviet artillery one afternoon in the summer of 1942 when he took us to visit a regiment of 152-millimeter (6-inch) howitzers that was in reserve in the rolling, farm country north of Moscow. There we found that like the Germans the Russians have four guns to a battery. He told us that the chief difference in tactics between the two armies so far as artillery is concerned was that the Germans believed more in area fire and the Russians in counter-battery fire. The German theory was that gunfire should be dispersed. The Russian idea was to em-

ploy guns to destroy enemy guns or other definite objectives such as pillboxes, troop concentrations, tanks, command posts and railroad stations.

In the regiment we visited the troops seemed thoroughly trained although Tikhonov said the unit had been organized only six weeks before. Perhaps the men had been trained first in other units, perhaps at artillery training schools before being assigned to their regiment. Great attention was paid at all times to camouflage. The paths were carefully covered with grass and leaves. Branches hid the guns that were partially buried in pits. Men in observation posts were either underground or wearing green-and-brown cloaks and hats to blend them into the background. The guns themselves which could hurl eighty-eight-pound projectiles up to eleven miles were fixed about thirty yards apart. For every gun there were two reserve firing positions.

When we arrived, the guns were in position and the crews were going through all the motions of fire, observation of fire, correction of range, throwing in the projectiles, ramming them home, pretending to insert the charge, closing the breech and pulling the cord.

"How long will it take you to ready the gun so that it can be transported by tractor?" the General asked a young gun commander.

"Six minutes," the soldier said.

"Let's see you."

The crew set to work in perfect coordination. Within four and a half minutes the gun was ready for the tractor.

Tikhonov said that since the outbreak of war the Red Army had issued instruction that all crews of guns up

to 6-inch howitzers were to be trained for anti-tank fire. Too often in the early weeks had German tanks broken through the line and caught Russian artillery unprepared. While we were at this regiment the gunners were practicing direct fire at six hundred yards.

The backbone of Soviet artillery, however, was not the 6-inch gun or howitzer. The most widely used gun was of 76 millimeters (3 inches). Next came the lighter 45-millimeter weapon (1.8-inch), probably the lightest field artillery piece in use by any army, not counting antitank artillery. Third in importance was a 122-millimeter (about 5-inch) combination gun-howitzer.

The Germans used for the most part 88-millimeter and 105-millimeter guns, later 75-millimeter guns, a 75-millimeter howitzer with an incredibly short barrel, a 150-millimeter gun with a range of twenty-two miles and a 150-millimeter howitzer with a range of ten miles.

The Germans also had 8-inch and 14-inch guns which they planned to use against Moscow and did use against Sevastopol.

German mortars ranged from the little 50-millimeter weapon all the way up to a huge 615-millimeter (24-inch) weapon. So far as I know this 24-inch mortar was used only against Sevastopol. The Germans may have had only one experimental model and found it too heavy to handle. They used 81-millimeter mortars, a six-barrel 152-millimeter mortar and in the Battle for Moscow experimented with a few 310-millimeter (13-inch) weapons.

Russian mortars were of 50-millimeter, 82-millimeter and 122-millimeter caliber.

Besides this artillery the Red Army used widely dur-

ing the war a secret weapon that was called either "Katusha" or "Kostikov's Gun" after its inventor, Andre Kostikov. No American or British observer was ever allowed to see it in action, even after some models had fallen into German hands. It was the Red Army's closest-guarded secret, and it is still so far as I know. The weapon was mounted on a platform on the rear of a truck but, whenever the trucks were driven about, a heavy tarpaulin covered the working mechanism.

Russians said, probably correctly, that Katusha was fired only by NKVD or police troops. The idea was that it was driven up to the battle line, fired from the truck and then driven away after the tarpaulin had covered the mechanism. In Moscow for a long time we never knew whether it was a gun, a howitzer, a mortar or some sort of a rocket gun. We still don't know, but once we were allowed to see vague pictures of it in action. The films were taken at night. It looked as if on the platform of each truck there were six troughs or barrels from which rockets or flaming projectiles were fired in rapid succession. The effect of the fire was not shown. In Moscow, however, we had the impression it was strictly an anti-personnel weapon. The people of the capital believe to this day that it was Katusha that drove the Germans back from the capital.

The Russians during the war proved to be great believers in the theory of using artillery well up in the forward lines with the advance echelons of infantry and engineers. Their lack of tank and air power almost forced them to this opinion, but it worked in winter time even if in summer the Red Army had to resort to other tactics. When the snow lay deep on the ground,

forward artillery was possible because German tank and air forces were severely handicapped. In executing their theory the Russians were aided by the lightness of their guns which often enabled them to be hauled by hand over country where German motorized artillery was unable to go. The 45-millimeter gun could be dragged and pushed by nine men. Three teams of horses usually carried the 76-millimeter guns.

That was the real strength of the Russian artillery. It was adapted to Russian fighting conditions. German weapons were not.

CHAPTER 10

“As Long as Fuel Lasts”

SOME day a great story of the war in the Soviet Union can be built around a simple account of what happened to the twenty-five armored divisions that Adolf Hitler sent across the Russian frontier. They were the blade of his sword, the machines that carved the way for his infantry and artillery. When they won, the Germans won. When they lost, the Germans lost.

The Russians agree that their enemy had tank superiority in the first year of the war and kept it at least throughout the second year. It was the only arm of the service besides the Air Force in which they admitted deficiency in numbers. The result was that after the first month or so of the invasion they stopped trying to trade punches with the German armored columns. In the future their strategy was to avoid large tank battles, to use their artillery against German tanks and to employ their own tanks against German manpower. In that way they sought to whittle down the enemy advantage. It was not, the Russian knew, the ideal way to fight. The correct way to meet mass tank attack is with tank counter-attack. But their way was the way dictated by circumstances and after two years of warfare their strategy proved to be sound. It was costly but the alternative might have been disastrous.

Conscious of original tank superiority, the German High Command started its "lightning war" against the Soviet Union following the formula that had proved so successful in France. Its tank divisions were organized into tank groups and tank armies, tremendous forces of iron and steel and flame. These groups and armies were concentrated in the form of wedges with the apex turned towards the heart of Russia. The wedges were headed by motorcycle units and one or two tank divisions. Behind them came motorized divisions accompanied by all the service units. Then came two or three more tank divisions and behind them several more motorized divisions. These were Hitler's famous tank daggers.

"The German High Command," says a Soviet historian, "made oblique thrusts at the Red Army along converging routes to a depth of 180 to 250 miles. Thus, one group forced its way through Kovno-Vilna to Minsk and then on to Smolensk, while another advanced through Bielostok to Minsk and then on to Smolensk. The object of this maneuver was to plunge the daggers into the body of the Red Army at an angle so as to converge at its rear and in this way cut it up into parts. The parts were then to be surrounded and destroyed."

That was "lightning war" according to the Nazi pattern. A German order to the Second Tank Group read in part: "Of decisive importance will be an attack with engines operating at full power. Ignoring danger to flanks, without respite or rest, in day and night battles, it must advance as long as fuel lasts."

Such in part were the tactics that brought the German armored columns to within sixty-five miles of Moscow at the end of the fourth month of war. And then on

November 16, 1941 when the second and last assault on Moscow was launched thirteen tank divisions were hurled against the capital. But they suffered terribly in the final assault as they had in the early months. They had covered territory all right but at frightful expense. The result was that the German armored columns that made the last dash towards Moscow were far weaker than they were when they had crossed the frontier almost five months before. They had attacked, been defeated, attacked and gained ground. But every day they were hurled into a meat grinder. Their best tank drivers, best gunners, some of the finest officers, men of much battle experience, died on the way. Reserves came up but the reserves were never quite as good as the first-line troops. On December 6, when the Russians counter-attacked and hurled the Germans from the capital, again the tank forces suffered. It was not so much the loss of machines that counted but the loss of skilled men, and once again the reserves were not as experienced as the tank troops they replaced. At the end of the Battle for Moscow thirteen of Hitler's twenty-five tank divisions were bruised and bleeding.

They were the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 10th, 11th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th Tank Divisions. Two others, the 8th and 12th, had suffered before the gates of Leningrad to the northwest.

In the closing months of that first winter the German High Command sent these armored divisions back to Germany for reorganization and reformation. The snow in Russia was too deep for them to be used with any effect. They needed a rest and new equipment. The Red

Army itself was too tired to continue the counter-offensive for long.

After that we never heard much more about the armored forces until sometime in May when the Russians attacked near Kharkov and until June when the Germans began their drive towards Stalingrad. Then we began to hear of the old divisions that had been beaten back from Moscow the winter before and of new divisions that Hitler sent up from the deep rear. Again there was "lightning war" across open country, a race for the Russian rear, but now the retreating Red Army could see a change in enemy tactics. The old all-out warfare of the summer before was gone. German orders no longer read "advance as long as the fuel lasts." In the summer of 1942 it was a more cautious German Army, an army that used its tank divisions as the spearhead of attack but an army that used them more carefully and with more respect for Russian anti-tank defense. In the drive towards Stalingrad and the Volga the Germans employed their armored columns as before in close cooperation with their air force, but now they used them too in close cooperation with artillery. That was the great change in tank tactics during the summer of 1942 as compared with the summer of 1941. It was a significant change.

As the year wore on, as the Germans reached and were stopped at Stalingrad and down in the Caucasus, and as the Russian counter-offensive that began in November and continued through January progressed — the armored divisions won and lost, won and lost, but whenever they entered an engagement they suffered and whenever they suffered the replacements were found to

be less experienced than the men they replaced. Germany's armored might was being worn down.

During the year the old tank divisions were hammered as they had been hammered the year before. The 1st, 2d and 5th were routed west of Moscow in fighting near Rzhev and Gzhatsk. The 3d was clipped near Mzodok in the Caucasus; the 4th got it before Voronezh. The 6th was clubbed at Kotelnikovo. The 11th lost first at Voronezh and later further south along the Don. The 12th that had been beaten near Leningrad suffered terribly way down in the North Caucasus. The 17th had some bad days in the drive towards Voronezh. And the 18th and 19th were pushed around on the central front. Of the thirteen tank divisions that had been defeated in the winter battle near Moscow, only three escaped defeat in the second summer. They were the 7th, 10th and 20th. The 8th armored division that had lost before Leningrad kept out of the 1942 fighting.

The year 1942 also saw the defeat of new divisions that had not been used near Moscow. They were the 13th, 14th, 16th, 21st, 22d, 23d and 24th, an SS or Deathshead armored division and the 1st Rumanian armored division.

As near as we could determine in Moscow, twenty of Hitler's twenty-five tank divisions had been pushed around in the second year of the war. Of the remaining five, four had suffered in the first year but later had been reorganized, and only one, the 25th, had escaped serious loss.

Some weeks later during a visit to Kharkov I talked to the Russian commander of the Kharkov garrison. He was Major General Evitiki Belov, forty-two years old,

a tank officer, who was the first Russian to tell me that great strides had been made in the job of whittling down German tank superiority. He did not say the Russians then had the advantage of numbers, but he did say the enemy advantage at that time was slight. The German loss of machines, he said, had been enormous. The German loss of trained tank personnel, he said, was irreplaceable. Both, he said, were apparent at the front.

Over this same long period of time the Red Army concentrated on its two objectives which were to construct as much anti-tank artillery as possible and to double its own tank production. Its greater success was in the construction of anti-tank artillery and other weapons such as anti-tank grenades, anti-tank rifles and anti-tank flame-bottles.

In Russia it was believed that the German Army had several times as many tanks as the Red Army at the outbreak of the war. The number of German machines was fixed at anywhere from 15,000 to 18,000. Furthermore German tank production was greater than Russian tank production. As it strove to overcome this production advantage the Red Army ran into terrific obstacles, in part the result of the early loss of industrial areas, in part the result of transportation difficulties caused by the need to evacuate hundreds of factories to the east. The Kirov plant in Leningrad, for example, which manufactured Russia's 46-ton KV tank, was forced to move to the Ural Mountains. It took a long time then for the Russians to catch up with German tank production, and in the first two years I do not believe that they did catch up. The manufacture of thousands of anti-tank weapons, however, helped them to whittle down the

German advantage in the field. As the war developed the army organized what it called universal anti-tank defense, according to which every detachment had its own anti-tank equipment.

Lacking sufficient tank forces with which to engage the German tank formations, the Russians evolved a system of defense that went something like this: — First it strove with attack-bombers and field artillery to break up German formations before they could be launched at the Russian line. This frequently led to the destruction of enemy machines but it seldom was able to prevent the attack. Then as the Germans rumbled towards the Russian line the Russians tried to carry out a twofold plan. The idea was to separate German tanks from their supporting infantry, and after they were cut off and operating alone to smash the tanks. To accomplish this Russian infantry laid low at the approach of enemy machines and rose out of the ground or bushes only when enemy infantry was at close range. At this same time the infantry's anti-tank teams, firing light anti-tank guns, anti-tank grenades and fuel bottles, hugged the ground until the tanks had passed and then they rose to engage them. In carrying out this maneuver the Russians often lost heavily but when they were successful German tanks were cut off from their supporting infantry.

Now one of two things happened. Either the tanks turned back to pick up their infantry again or the tanks continued on in a dash for Russian artillery positions. In both cases Russian artillery opened fire, usually from the second line of defense which was 600 yards behind the first.

Then the success of the artillery depended upon how well the guns had been concealed from the enemy. If the positions had been revealed either by air reconnaissance, scouting or because they opened fire too soon, the artillerymen were in for trouble. If on the other hand the gunners had made use of their reserve firing positions and carefully camouflaged them, they had a chance. The guns were operated in pairs with their sights fixed so that the trajectory of the projectiles was never higher than the turret of the enemy machines. In this way the guns could keep firing without its being necessary to lower their angle of fire as the tank approached. The theory of firing the guns in pairs followed the knowledge that German tanks had their heaviest armor plate in the front. The idea was that the Russian gun toward which the enemy machine was driving would remain silent. Its companion gun, placed some distance to the right or left, then would open fire at the side of the tank. When the German machine swerved to engage the companion gun, the first gun would fire at the side of the tank. Thus, Russian projectiles were aimed at the sides of the machines where the armorplate was not so thick. The Russians found that this system worked under some conditions.

By this time division headquarters understood the German objective and the mobile anti-tank battalion, liberally equipped with 45-millimeter and 76-millimeter guns, was ordered into action. Sometimes it was successful. Sometimes it failed. But the Germans always lost some equipment, and so the wearing-down process continued.

When the Russians believed they had tank superi-

ority they would send their own machines into battle with the German machines. More often, however, they used their tanks against enemy infantry and artillery.

Of course, conditions at the front varied this formula from time to time. In the second summer of the war, when the Germans were striking across open steppe country for Stalingrad, there was little the Russians could do except cripple as many German tanks as possible, then retreat to a new line of resistance. The reason was that the front was too wide to be manned at every point. The Germans, holding the initiative, were selecting their lines of attack, and the Russians were forced to maneuver their divisions towards the sectors selected by the enemy. The Russians were operating under the inevitable handicaps that the offense always imposes on the defense. Under such conditions the Germans often hit the weak points in the Russian lines.

But as many months passed, the Red Army because it did not have enough tanks for tank counter-attack learned a great deal about anti-tank defense. Its crude, 20-millimeter, single-shot anti-tank rifle was not the best anti-tank weapon in the world but it did a lot of damage, and it had two great advantages over other weapons. It was easy to manufacture and it was easy to operate.

You may have seen pictures of this weapon in Soviet newsreels. It was light enough to be carried and fired by one man while another man could carry its ammunition. It could be fired at the rate of twelve shots a minute and Russians claimed it could penetrate one and a half inches of armor plate at short range. After the first year of war the Germans introduced a similar weapon, but it

was larger and heavier and more difficult to manufacture. Its caliber was 28-millimeter instead of 20-millimeter and it had to be transported on a wheeled carriage.

When the Germans went into their second year in Russia, their losses of the first year had forced them to make three important changes in equipment and tactics. The first, already mentioned, was the order that tank divisions should operate in close cooperation with infantry and artillery, instead of operating in the clear. The second, just referred to, was the introduction of the 28-millimeter anti-tank rifle. And the third involved a reorganization of the tank divisions themselves. Now the divisions no longer included two tank regiments and one motorized regiment, but only one tank regiment and two motorized regiments. They knew they had lost too many machines in the first year of the war. Russian anti-tank defense had begun to tell on them. Still another change, but one that was followed by all armies, increased the armor plate on light tanks from a half inch to a full inch and on the T-3 medium tanks from one inch to two inches. The T-4 model of medium tanks (introduced in 1942) carried 2.34 inches of armor plate.

It was the new type stream-lined tank division that the Germans in the second summer sent towards Stalin-grad and the Caucasus. During the early months of the campaign we heard little in Moscow of Russian tank forces, and the feeling began to grow as June passed and July, and August saw the Germans close to the Volga that something must have happened to the Red Army's mechanized brigades. Certainly, they had failed to stop the Germans from crossing the Don steppes. But I think

it is clear now, in the light of what happened later, that in those months the Red Army simply refused to engage the bulk of its armored forces. Again it had put in operation the old system, which was to whittle down German tank formations with Russian artillery and save Russian tanks for use against German infantry or for future use against enemy tanks. In this the Red Army was helped by two things. The battle in September and October took place either inside the city of Stalingrad itself or far to the south in the high foothills of the Northern Caucasus Mountains. In neither place were the Germans able to operate their tanks with any real effect. In street fighting tanks are of little use and the Germans learned to their sorrow that the craters created by their own bombing force constituted obstacles to the operation of mechanized equipment. Nevertheless, the Germans used tank divisions in Stalingrad, the Russians say because German infantry was unwilling to attack without tank support.

I do not know when it was the Russian High Command first began to plan its Stalingrad counter-offensive, probably early in October of 1942, a month before it was launched. Anyway, from then on the Red Army began to receive large tank forces from the deep rear, larger than anything it had been able to use since the early weeks of the war. It had started the war with tank divisions but huge losses forced it to reduce them to brigades during the Battle for Moscow. In the Stalingrad counter-offensive tank troops were being operated as corps.

The original Soviet tank division included two tank regiments of 180 machines each, one motorized infan-

try regiment, one motorized artillery regiment, a reconnaissance battalion, engineers and signal troops. The tank brigades that were used in the defense of Moscow consisted of one tank regiment with anywhere from 60 to 96 tanks, a motorized infantry and machine-gun battalion, a reconnaissance group, a motorized mortar company, and anti-tank and anti-aircraft groups. I never was able to determine the composition of a Russian tank corps. It probably had no more tanks than the original tank division of 360 machines. The German tank division at the start of the invasion had about 400 tanks but not more than 200 or 250 in the second year of the war.

When the Red Army threw its tank corps into the Stalingrad counter-offensive, it used the same type of machines that it had been operating before. They carried heavier armor plate, it is true, but their design was the same and their firepower the same.

The best tank, if not the most spectacular, was the medium-size T-34, weighing 26.3 tons. It carried one 76-millimeter (3-inch) gun with a length of bore of 30 calibers, one machine gun in the turret and another machine gun beside the driver fixed to fire straight ahead. The Russians said it could go 31 miles an hour and that its range was 160 miles. It was the backbone of the Red Army's tank forces. A more astonishing-looking machine was the KV, weighing 42.3 tons, named after Marshal Klimenti Voroshilov. It was an all-welded tank, built high off the ground, with an unusually wide tread that enabled it to pass through mud and snow that most tanks could not handle. Its firepower was about the same as the lighter T-34. There was, however, an

improved version of the KV, called the KV-2, weighing 52 tons. In its turret was mounted either a 122-millimeter (5-inch) or 152-millimeter (6-inch) howitzer, but this heavy model was really more of a mobile pillbox than a tank. It usually was fired from stationary and concealed positions. The Red Army had two types of light tank. One was the T-60 of 5.8 tons that was based on an original amphibious T-40. It mounted one 20-millimeter gun and one machine gun. The other was an improvement of the T-60, called the T-70. It fired a 45-millimeter gun.

At Stalingrad Russian tank corps equipped with these machines had armored superiority on the sectors they selected for attack. I was told, however, this did not mean the Red Army had as many tanks as the Germans, but that it did have enough to achieve superiority on a wide front. This was something new for the Russians.

In the first two years of war, then, there was one great trend taking place in tank warfare along the entire front. Both sides started with large tank forces, the Germans with more than the Russians. Huge tank battles took place in the first weeks with as many as a thousand and two thousand machines on a side. After that the Russians relied on anti-tank defense and saved their machines as much as they could. Gradually German strength was whittled down and Russian power increased. I believe that at the end of the second year the Germans still had the advantage of numbers, but the advantage was slight. And neither side has as many tanks as it had had on the opening day of invasion.

One thing that should not be forgotten is that American and British aid contributed a lot to increased Rus-

sian tank power. From October of 1941 to October of 1942 we shipped more than 4,000 machines. The majority of them reached Russia safely. Of course, in Moscow we heard very little of this tank equipment because the Russians were told little about it by their government. In the year and a half I was in Russia I never saw a story about American or British tanks published in a Soviet newspaper by a Soviet correspondent. Occasionally, a story appeared on the foreign pages, quoting an American or British official to the effect that we were sending tanks. And yet we knew the tanks were there and knew they were being used. Once in a great while a Russian officer would admit they had gone into action on his sector of the front.

CHAPTER 11

War in the Air

I^N the summer of 1938 I went to Prague to cover Czechoslovakia during the Sudeten German crisis that was to end with the settlement at Munich. Charles A. Lindbergh passed through the Czech capital at that time after a visit to the Soviet Union where he had talked with many Russian pilots and inspected several Russian aircraft factories. He told friends that he considered the Red Air Force an unknown quantity. Later on he was quoted as saying in London that it was not much good, but that is not what he said when he was in Prague.

The Red Air Force was an unknown quantity in 1938 and it is still an unknown quantity today as far as the rest of the world is concerned. To the best of my knowledge no American or British pilot has ever been allowed to inspect or fly a Soviet plane and the American and British armies know little about Russian planes and their performance. They are the important secrets of the Red Army, secret even from Russia's allies although since the early days of the war the Russians have been flying allied fighters and bombers that were shipped as aid to the Soviet Union. On the other hand it is fair to say that the Americans and the British kept some aviation secrets from the Russians.

Anyway it is almost impossible for a foreigner to write much about the Red Air Force.

We knew in Moscow, from frequent flights in Soviet transport planes, that Russian pilots were good. They flew with a dash and an assurance that came only from intensive training combined with natural ability. They flew low. They flew fast. They brought their planes down without bothering to circle the fields. In these transports which were of the DC-3 type used by American commercial airlines the Russians had built machine-gun turrets in the center of the fuselage just above the heads of the passengers. I think they were the first people to put turrets in this type of plane. We knew also in Moscow that Russian fighter planes were fast. We saw them often in the air, landing and taking off. We noticed that their pilots retracted the landing gear almost before the planes had reached air speed. Their fighters were smaller than the planes used by the Americans, the British or the Germans. They were lighter and we guessed that their engines were less powerful. From seeing them at a short distance we had the impression they were not so heavily armed as foreign ships.

But Russian pursuit planes did seem to be peculiarly adapted to air warfare in Russia where at the front there were few permanent airdromes with hard-surfaced runways and where the pilots landed and took off from little more than huge cow pastures. Unlike the landing gear in most foreign planes Russian wheels were raised and lowered in such a way that it was a matter of one or two hours to replace them with skis for winter flying.

It is difficult therefore to judge whether the Germans

or the Russians put the better planes in the air. For summer warfare the Germans seemed to us to have the advantage of quality as well as quantity. For winter warfare the Russians undoubtedly had superior equipment. I think that if a German and a Russian plane were to be tested tomorrow at LaGuardia Field in New York, the American pilot would pick the German machine as the better fighter, that he would find it faster and more heavily armed. But I also think that if that same pilot were to test the two planes on a small winter airdrome during a Russian February he would pick the Russian ship.

The Commander of the Russian Air Force throughout the war was a young, thin-faced pilot with receding hair by the name of Alexander Novikov, one of perhaps seven hundred Russian soldiers who have won the gold star of a Hero of the Soviet Union. Novikov was thirty-six years old and a major general when the German invasion began. Five months later he was promoted to lieutenant general. He personally conducted Soviet air operations during the Battle for Stalingrad and was promoted to the rank of colonel general on January 18, 1943. A month later he became the first Marshal of Aviation in the Red Army, a post that was created especially for him.

Novikov's men flew three types of fighter planes, the MIG, the YAK and the LAGG; one attack plane called the IL; and at least two bombers, the PE-2 and the PE-3. They also flew an old fighter called the Chaika, a light observation plane the U-2, transports and gliders.

Improved versions of all these planes came out during the war, the MIG-3 was the latest of its type that I

heard of. It was a tiny fighter with a radial, air-cooled engine, very fast, armed I think with one cannon and two machine guns. I saw a MIG-3 squadron in training at an airfield near Kharkov in the second winter of the war. The pilots seemed to have trouble setting it down gently when they came in for a landing. The YAK was a fighter with an in-line water-cooled engine, somewhat heavier than the MIG. It was designed by the constructor Alexander Yakovlev after whom it was named. Yakovlev was given the rank of major general in the air force in November of 1942. The latest version of the LAGG that I heard of was the LA-5, named after its designer, S. A. Lavochkin. Russia's attack plane, used for the destruction of ground forces as well as artillery positions and other installations, was the famous "stormovik," the IL. In the first year of the war we usually heard of the IL-2 but in the second year pilots began to talk of a more heavily armed IL-4 that was just being turned out of the factories directed by the IL's designer, Major General Sergei Ilyushin. This was a heavy, single-motored, long-nosed plane that did not look very fast but apparently it was a powerful weapon.

German planes are already widely known in the United States and Great Britain. In fact, the latest models always seemed to be used on the Western Front before the Luftwaffe sent them to the east.

In Russia they used standard equipment, introducing nothing that the British had not fought against over the English Channel. The fighters included the ME-109, the ME-109-F, the ME-109-G, the ME-110, the HE-113 and the Focke-Wulf-190 and Focke-Wulf-190-A-3. The most widely used bombers were the Heinkel-111, the

JU-87 and JU-88. Their best reconnaissance plane was a twin-engine, twin-fuselage Focke-Wulf-189.

The greatest air battles of the war were fought in the first two months of the invasion when the Germans and the Russians counted their losses in the thousands. The Russians said the Germans lost 7,000 in that period and the Germans listed some other figure that was as high or higher for Russian casualties. Certainly both lost heavily but most correspondents were inclined to question all figures. During these first eight weeks the Luftwaffe moved steadily forward, following in the wake of its ground forces, while the Red Air Force was forced to move its squadrons to airdromes in the rear as the land army fell back towards Smolensk. But in the third and fourth months air fighting was not so intense. Both armies had lost more planes than they could afford. For a time the fields were covered with mud. Reinforcements were needed. In these months the Germans used about half of their planes for operations in the Russian rear and the other half in direct cooperation with the ground forces. The Russians concentrated as much as possible on the protection of their ground troops and on guarding their great cities.

In November neither air force was strong enough to revive the mass fighting that had occurred in the early weeks. But about this time something began to happen to the German air force. The winter was coming on and it was not prepared for winter warfare. In the first week of December it was unable to support its army that was struggling to get to Moscow. In the second week the Russian planes took to the air to support their army's counter-offensive. The Germans tried to stop them. The

weather grew colder and colder. The snow continued to fall. Now the Russians were using all their winter equipment. There were skis on the planes. Special precautions were taken to warm the engines. Anti-freeze was used to prevent oil in the guns and bombing apparatus from hardening. Other heating devices were used to warm the water and oil before they were put into the motors. The pilots began to put on their heavy sheepskin-lined flying suits, their heavy boots lined with dog fur and their dog-fur leggings. Ground crews brought out the heavy plows that were needed to keep the runways free from snow. And so the Russian planes were able to stay in the air at a time when the Germans practically had to stop flying entirely. It was said that the German mechanics often took as long as an hour and a half to warm an engine before they could start it. Some German squadrons had to be withdrawn from the theatre of operations. Bombing aviation suffered as much as the fighters. In those cold days of December and January and early February the German air force was crippled. Soviet planes flew at will on all sectors.

But the Russian honeymoon could not last. Soon there was a deadlock on land and then the spring thaw came. After the ground had hardened the Germans came back still relatively stronger than the Russians in the air. Nevertheless, a Russian officer, Major General Mikhail Shcherbakov, said that the best of Germany's flying personnel was gone, that ten months of war had wiped out the best pilots, the best navigators, and the best radio operators. Reports began to come in that in Germany new pilots were being trained in from three to six months. Among the veterans who had been killed

were Major Helmuth Wagner, the much decorated Nazi who in the Battle for Britain had bombed Buckingham Palace and Westminster Abbey, and General of Aviation Helmuth Weller, a veteran of the Condor Legion that Hitler had sent to aid Franco in Spain. Still another was Colonel Werner Moelders, chief inspector of German fighter aviation, who had led the air fleet assigned to protect Guderian's 2d Tank Army.

During the spring lull, however, before the German summer offensive towards Stalingrad, the Germans tried to cripple American and British convoys going to Murmansk and Archangel in the north. They assembled a powerful air force in northern Finland and Norway and they almost succeeded in stopping the convoys altogether. There were frightful raids on Murmansk on March 25, April 3, 4, 15 and 25. Many ships were lost at sea under the blows of Heinkels, Junkers and Focke-Wulfs equipped now with torpedoes as well as bombs.

They took advantage of the period of the Midnight Sun when our ships were clearly visible twenty-four hours a day. German seaplanes carried out continuous reconnaissance over the sea lanes. Fighter planes were sent out five times a day to gather meteorological information. A new type German torpedo was introduced which had some sort of a device that kept steady pressure on the rudder of the steering gyro. The result was the weapon when dropped from about 1,000 yards from a convoy moved in a circular course among the ships with the circle growing steadily narrower in diameter. Ships' captains found them difficult to evade. The Germans also began dropping wooden torpedoes. The idea was to force the convoy's anti-aircraft to open fire and

expend ammunition before the real attack. May, June and July were bad months for the seamen. The German assault finally was stopped only after the British began sending aircraft carriers along with the ships.

In the summer of 1942 as the German Army headed for Stalingrad the Luftwaffe introduced a few new things. When attacked by Russian fighters, its bombers dropped small parachute bombs that exploded two hundred yards from the planes, the idea being to prevent the Russians from coming in for rear attack. Now too the Germans began to use all their aircraft in support of the land army, abandoning raids into the Russian rear. The Messerschmitt-109-G was used for the first time, and its cannon fired shells fitted with time fuses that gave them a range of from three hundred to five hundred yards, instead of two hundred.

Finally, the battle front reached the city of Stalingrad and here the 8th German Air Force really had superiority over anything the Russians could or did assemble over the city. It may be that the Red Army purposely kept its fighter aviation in reserve, waiting for the days of the November counter-offensive. In any event the Nazis controlled the skies over the city. But when November came, the story of the previous winter was not repeated. To begin with most of the air fighting took place in southern Russia where the armies were locked in battle. Down there the Germans were lucky it was a mild winter and little snow was on the ground. So far as I know, in its counter-offensive from Stalingrad to Kharkov the Russians were unable to use their skis, so one advantage it had had the year before existed no longer. The weather, however, still was cold and the

Germans suffered again from thickening oil in their machine guns and bomb sights. They also suffered from the general speed of the land counter-offensive, which forced them to abandon prepared airdromes and brought about all the confusion that must accompany the transfer of squadrons from one field to another. In December and January the Russians did not exactly have things their own way as they had had the winter before. But they did have air superiority.

Both air forces at this period began introducing new models of aircraft. The Germans used the Focke-Wulf-190-A-3, the best plane they had. The Russians flew improved MIG's and LAGG's.

Then in Moscow new instructions were issued to fighter pilots which give some idea of what the Red Army thought of the relative merits of Russian and German planes. They read: "When losing altitude, the Germans often turn their wings, exposing the belly. Hit them at that time. Keep your altitude whenever possible. Extend the fight as long as possible for Russian planes have a greater fuel supply. Keep on maneuvering. Here Russian planes have the advantage. Open fire at 150 to 200 yards. The best targets are the upper and lower parts of the fuselage which are lightly armored, the engine, the oil distribution apparatus, the radiator and the fuel tanks."

None of us in Moscow ever learned very much about Russian bombers. Apparently Soviet factories concentrated on the production of fighters, attack planes, medium bombers and observation ships. Heavy bombers were seldom seen, and a Russian raid on Berlin or the Ploesti oil fields of Rumania was rarely reported. I be-

lieve it is true that the best medium bombers the Russians had were American-built. We saw many of them at Soviet airdromes. I saw many others on the airfields of Iran.

In the first year and a half of the war we did not send our best pursuit planes to Russia. The British sent Hurricanes but withheld their more powerful Spitfires. We sent our Tomahawks, Kittyhawks and Aircobras but withheld our Lightnings and Thunderbolts. In those days we did not have enough to spare. Toward the end of the second year, however, our best planes were on the way.

About the fighters we did send in the first eighteen months I found Russian pilots in complete agreement. They were good airplanes, too heavy perhaps for Russian airfields, not quite fast enough, but maneuverable and heavily armed. In those days they liked the Aircobras best. They called them "Cobras." Later they received more modern versions of the Curtiss P-40 and they liked them as well as the "Cobra."

CHAPTER 12

The Commissars

WHILE Russia was at war with Finland, more than a year before the German invasion, I visited a Finnish prison camp where more than twelve hundred Russian soldiers were confined. One of them was a short, stocky major who had commanded a regiment of the Red Army's 44th Division that had been smashed to pieces near Suomussalmi. In the closing days of this battle the major had had command of the remnants of the division. Then with a few survivors he had tried to escape through the woods where he was found lying exhausted in the snow.

I talked to him for a whole afternoon one January day and found him still a soldier, unwilling to divulge any information that possibly could have been of value to the Finns. He said he expected to be killed and did not care whether he was or not because after the war he had little hope of returning to a position of command in the Red Army. His government, he said, was suspicious of its soldiers who were captured by the enemy, even more so of an officer who was captured. For capture meant surrender, and what right has one man to surrender while his comrades are being killed at his side?

That was the first reasonable explanation I had heard of why the Soviet Union consistently refused to ex-

change prisoners with an enemy or even to exchange information about prisoners.

And this was not a point of view that was peculiar to Russia under the Soviets. One of Napoleon's officers, General Count Philip de Segur, wrote a history of the French invasion of Russia in 1812 in which he admitted that thousands of Russian prisoners died in French prison camps, particularly during the retreat from Moscow. Many were killed in cold blood. The General wrote:

"These unfortunate people were then merely left to die of hunger in the enclosures where at night they were confined like brute beasts. This was no doubt a barbarity too; but what could we do? Exchange them? The enemy rejected the proposal. Release them? They would have gone and published the general distress and soon joined by others they would have returned to pursue us. In this mortal warfare, to give them their lives would have been sacrificing our own. We were cruel from necessity. This mischief arose from our having involved ourselves in so dreadful an alternative."

And so I think there was something essentially Russian, and not Soviet, in the Soviet Government's original refusal to sign the Geneva Convention in regard to the treatment and disposal of prisoners of war. This major with whom I talked in the Finnish prison camp accepted the situation as one that was to be expected. Later while in Russia during the German invasion I saw many other examples of this feeling, and in many ways I think it turned out to be a valuable weapon in Russian hands. The Russians understood it and accepted it. The Germans knew that once they were captured nothing would be heard from or about them at least until the

end of the war. Their families would never know. And that at times produced a paralyzing fear in their hearts.

It was a hard, cruel war at the front and behind it, and prisoners suffered on both sides. I know that the Russians have proof of innumerable cases in which literally thousands of their soldiers died in German prison camps, sometimes they said from barbarous torture, sometimes from hunger and exposure. I know too that many German prisoners died in Russian hands. A Russian colonel of artillery told me one day that he had killed two prisoners with his own gun, so angered was he by some atrocity he had just come across. But I think on the whole that prisoners were treated fairly well once they had been sent to the rear far from the madness and passion of the battle line.

In the Red Army it was the corps of political instructors that told the troops what to expect if they fell into German hands and it was the political instructors who told them that if they were captured they would have to explain some day why they had surrendered while their comrades were dying in battle near by. They were the commissars of the Red Army, the political representatives of the Communist Party, the young men so cordially detested by the officers of other armies of the world. Before I went to Finland I had read a lot about them, but it was not until I talked to that Russian major after the battle of Suomussalmi that I began to understand exactly what their function was.

In his opinion there were good commissars and bad ones. When they were good, they were very useful. When they were bad, they could disrupt the unit to which they were attached.

The idea of the commissar system was to have attached to every Red Army unit, to every squadron if it was in the air corps, to every platoon if it was an infantry unit, a member of the Communist Party whose job it was to teach communism to the troops, to preach loyalty to the regime, to report the presence of counter-revolutionaries, to check on the political activities of officers as well as men, to watch over and build up their morale, in short to be the official representatives of the Communist Party within the Red Army. All high-ranking officers and most junior officers, of course, were communists anyway, but relatively few of the men in the ranks were members.

The system was instituted in the early days of the Red Army soon after the November revolution. At that time it was needed because among the Bolsheviks there were few trained officers and the young army was forced to rely on many Czarist officers whose loyalty could not always be depended upon. In those days the commissars were a vital part of the army. They may have been the force that kept the army together. But as the years passed and the Czar's officers were dropped out and Bolsheviks were trained to take their place, the government continued to maintain the system. There was always a chance that the Red Army leadership, wielding so much power, might try to seize the reins of state control. Civilian members of the party were determined that it should not. And so the commissars stayed on, the official representatives of the party and the long arm of Soviet law.

After Lenin's death there was a contest for party leadership between the Stalinist and Trotskyite ele-

ments within the party. The Stalin followers won out and thereafter any officer or anyone else who was not absolutely loyal to Stalin was considered an enemy of the Soviet state. Then the commissars were useful for they were in a position to report on any commander who wavered from the Stalinist line. Some commanders did and for their mistake they were liquidated or banished from the army in the great purges of 1937 and 1938.

In those years of peace the commissars wielded extraordinary power. They had the right to countersign all orders issued by the troop commanders and if they refused to countersign the order was invalid. But as time went on things worked out pretty much as the officers of many foreign armies thought they would work out. The system of commissar control led to divided responsibility and divided responsibility led to inefficiency. Nevertheless, the system was in full force when the Red Army invaded Finland in the fall of 1939, and I think it is reasonable to suppose that many of the mistakes of that campaign can be laid at the door of the commissars. The Soviet Government seemed to think so too for within a few weeks after the campaign ended in the spring of 1940 the commissar system was abolished from the army. Political instructors remained, but they no longer had the right to pass on the military decisions of the troop commanders. And that was the situation for the fifteen months that passed between the Finnish war and the German invasion, the fifteen months when the Red Army corrected so many mistakes.

Within the first week of the German war, however, the Communist Party reintroduced the commissar sys-

tem. Things had not gone too well at first. Stalin gave one of the explanations when he admitted in his Order of the Day issued on May 1, 1942 that there was: "complacency and nonchalance with regard to the enemy that could be observed among the men during the first few months." So the commissars came back to watch what was going on, to check any wavering in the ranks and to watch over the morale of the detachments. But this time they came back with reduced power. Now they had the right to countersign military orders of the commander, but they were advised to exercise this privilege only on rare occasions. The idea was that for the most part they would look out for morale and let the officers handle the troops. In battle they were urged to appear on the battlefield and observe the mistakes of officers as well as troops. After the battle they made it a practice to call the detachment together, cite examples of bravery and cowardice, of good judgment and bad judgment. Often the commissars themselves participated in the fighting and the Soviet press at home did everything it could to build up the idea that these men were the bravest and most intelligent the Red Army had. Stories of them continued for many months and to a large extent I think that the press succeeded, not only because there was no other viewpoint expressed but because in fact these commissars were able men, carefully picked, carefully trained. I believe that as far as the men in the ranks were concerned the commissars did their jobs well.

But the fact remained that their presence in the detachments with the right to countersign military orders, even if this right were seldom exercised, often led to divided responsibility and the divided responsibility led

to inefficiency. The troop commanders as a rule did not like this check on their judgment and many protested. The result was that in October of 1942 the Peoples Commissariat of Defense announced that in the future there would be no more commissars, only political instructors with the one job of caring for the political education of the men assigned to them. In the future Red Army officers had undivided command. All responsibility for their operations against the enemy rested with them and they alone had to account to their superior officers for reverses in the field. The new order came out during the most dangerous days of the Battle for Stalingrad. Under the new setup the political instructors received officer's rank but they did not command troops in the field. Their new position was as assistant to the unit commander, a sort of assistant chief of staff in charge of political work.

When this change came about many former commissars were transferred from political work to the command of troops. The first order provided for two hundred of them to become regimental commanders immediately and six hundred to command battalions. For the new work many were qualified for all had received military training in addition to their regular political education. At the Moscow school for commissars, for example, the 780-hour course was divided as follows: 150 hours for political instruction, 220 hours to tactics, 182 hours to weapons and the rest to other military subjects.

Some of the political instructors had curious backgrounds. I knew one man in Moscow who was thirty years old and had just finished his training at the Khar-

kov Military-Political School, which had been evacuated to Tashkent. He had been graduated from the Chemical Institute in Moscow and worked for a year in a synthetic rubber factory. Then by order of the cadres department of the Communist Party he was assigned to political work at a cattle-breeding farm. He was there a year before returning to Moscow as editor of the university newspaper. Later he served for a year and a half as a broadcasting inspector in Middle Asiatic cities. In 1942 he was mobilized and sent to the school for commissars. There this party member who had had so many jobs found that all students were under thirty-one years of age, and the instructors were all high-ranking officers. He found the food good and the work hard. The men were up at five o'clock in the morning and every day they had four hours' practical training, four hours' theoretical training and two hours' political education. After four months he was graduated with the rank of senior lieutenant at a salary of 800 rubles a month.

He told me he knew he was not yet qualified to command troops, but he believed after serving some months as political educator of a detachment he would acquire the necessary experience.

CHAPTER 13

Two Russias

THERE really are two Russias, the Russia of summer and the Russia of winter and they are as different as night and day. One is the Russia of sunshine and warmth, of green fields and ripening grain, of barefooted boys, of men and women rowing on the rivers, of light, brightly-colored dresses, of laughter. But the Russia of winter is a country of deep snows and piercing cold, of angry winds, of trains blocked by deep drifts, of long nights, of suffering. When we were in Moscow in summertime, life was pleasant. We could get on a bus outside of the Moskva Hotel and ride to the outskirts of the city for long walks along the highways or for a swim in the Moscow-Volga Canal near Khimki. On Sundays we often went to the Gorky Park of Culture and Rest which is just beyond the Kremlin. Its name may be a little misleading for if there was any culture connected with it in wartime it mounted to little more than some excellent concerts. For the most part it was just a vast amusement park where soldiers liked to take their girls in the afternoon. On the rare occasions when we were allowed to leave the capital for a visit to the army we saw a Russia we had never seen in time of winter. Peasant women and children worked in the fields. The roads with the ice and snow gone were mainly of dirt

with occasional strips of cobblestone. The little wooden houses looked comfortable enough but most of them needed repairs because the fathers and sons were away at the front.

But by December the entire appearance of Russia had changed. You no longer saw the bright red, yellow and green dresses of summer. Everyone now was dressed to the teeth in gray or black. The people looked more tired. Their apartments were cold. They often sat at home with their overcoats on. The food was not quite as good. In some buildings the water pipes broke. Men and women hurried along in the streets anxious to get where they had to go. They pushed and shoved to find a place on a bus or street car. They dreaded the long waiting in line for bread. And yet out in the country Russia looked as beautiful in winter as it had in summer. Everything was white as far as you could see except the forests and the villages. The ice-covered roads were firm beneath the wheels of army trucks.

By the same token, when you speak of Russia at war you should speak of summer warfare and winter warfare, and they too were as different as night and day. In summer the troops wore light uniforms and comfortable overseas caps. On the firing line they rolled up their sleeves and often they discarded their steel helmets as unpleasant if sometimes useful protection. Now you saw high black boots and the light loose-fitting shirt over which the soldiers wore Sam Browne belts. Their trucks and guns were painted for camouflage a strange combination of green and brown. Out at the airfields the planes were taking off on wheels instead of skis. Life was easier. In those days traveling artists gave more

frequent performances at the front because the concerts could take place out of doors. The only trouble was that the German Army was a mechanized army, adapted to summer warfare, and so it was during the warm months that the Germans had their great successes.

But this, of course, was no surprise to the Russians, and they knew in the opening days of the war, or they found it out very quickly, that they could not stand on an open plain and fight out the war shot for shot. They adopted, therefore, a system of warfare which consisted of organized retreat in summer and counter-offensive in winter. Their method was to pull back from June to the end of October, when conditions best suited the Germans, to grind down German manpower as they retreated and to organize their reserves so that when winter came they could bring more firepower to bear on the vital sector than the enemy could. It was a costly process for it meant the abandonment of large fertile areas that the country could not readily afford to lose, and more often than not the Russians found the villages destroyed by the time they were able to recapture them in November, December, January and February. But it was a grand strategy dictated by necessity since the Germans had tank and plane superiority. And it worked.

I think it is generally believed that Adolf Hitler sent a summer army into Russia because he felt he could destroy the Red Army within a few months. But I am more inclined to think that the German attack on Russia was an attack of desperation, that the German High Command had great respect for the Red Army and that it felt that it had to strike in 1941, whether it was fully prepared or not. It may have believed that 1942 would

be too late, that another year of military production and the Soviet Union would be too strong to conquer. And so came the attack in June of 1941 with a summer army, equipped with summer uniforms and summer weapons.

By that first November, when the Red Army was holding before Moscow and planning its counter-offensive, Russian winter equipment was being fed into the lines. Up went the felt boots to replace leather boots. Up went the heavy gloves, the fur and sheepskin hats, the heavy sheepskin or wool overcoats, the stoves to keep the men warm in the dugouts. Now the guns moving to the front went with barrels painted white as camouflage against the snow. The tanks and trucks were painted white. White strips of cloth covered artillery positions. At the airdromes the planes were fitted with skis and adjustments were made to all kinds of motorized equipment so that the terrible frosts would not clog the lubrication of engines and jam the working parts of cannon and machine guns. Labor battalions were brought up to keep the runways and highways free of snow, and they worked night and day, in temperature that in January dropped to more than 40 degrees below zero. As they shoveled and worked, these men, most of whom were more than forty years old, covered their noses and mouths with strips of cloth so that the moisture from their breathing would not congeal on their faces.

Now all warfare was different. The Germans were using a lot of motorized artillery. They could not move that far out into the fields away from the roads unless they built runways over which the trucks could move. But the Russians were relying mostly on horse artil-

lery, and their light 45-millimeter (1.8 inch) guns could be moved by hand if necessary, nine men to a gun. The Germans too had large numbers of tanks, but they learned after the snows fell that a light tank cannot move in more than twelve inches of snow and a medium tank is stopped by eighteen inches. The result was that towards the end of December the Germans began sending their tank divisions back to Germany for reorganization and reformation. Their soldiers in the field began to suffer intensely from the cold. Their light overcoats were little more than topcoats under which they wore a sweater if they were lucky enough to have received one from home. Their gloves were inadequate. They had no heavy hats, only their overseas caps which they buttoned down under their chins. But they were not warm enough and the men began stealing everything they could take from Russian civilians, women's dresses, scarves, jackets, anything they could wrap or tie on that might provide some little protection against the cold. I remember one day seeing a German tank officer beside his crippled machine. He lay dead on the ground. On his legs was a suit of bright blue skiing pants he had stolen from some Russian woman, a style peculiar to the country. One day in Mozhaïsk we talked to ten Nazi prisoners. One of them, Fritz Ahrends, a winegrower from the Moselle country, had burlap bags wrapped around his bare feet.

I asked him what had happened to his boots.

"They were stolen from me by —."

He faltered, stopped and looked uneasily at the Russian guards, as if he were afraid he had angered them and might suffer the consequences.

"Go on," said the Russian officer. "What happened to them?"

"They were taken from me," he said with some effort. "After I was captured some soldiers took me into a house and pulled them off."

"Where did you get the boots?" the Russian asked.

"Well," Ahrends said, "I found them in an empty house in a village we passed through several weeks ago. They weren't mine but I took them. They were made of felt and were warm. My old boots were just ordinary leather boots."

These ten prisoners were a pathetic sight. Some had sores on their ears and noses from frostbite. One walked with a limp from frostbite of his toes. Corporal August Egger said that in his company four men were dying daily of the cold. I think it is true that this terrible suffering did not last more than three or four weeks. After a time the Germans stopped their retreat and from then on (after January) they lived in Russian villages, controlled the roads and kept only strong patrols in the fields and forests. Then they were able to organize their quarters for by this time the Russians too were exhausted from more than five months of retreat and two months of counter-offensive.

In winter neither the Germans nor the Russians bothered to bury their land mines under the ground. All they had to do was scoop out a little snow, place them and cover them up. Since it was easier to lay them, more were scattered about. The system of finding them was to poke about in the snow with a bayonet attached to the end of a long stick. When the bayonet struck something metallic, the engineers came up to remove

the mine. It was not as dangerous as it sounds because the men did not poke hard enough to cause an explosion.

Just as winter equipment differs from summer equipment, winter tactics differ from summer tactics. For years the Russians had trained for winter warfare. They always held winter as well as summer maneuvers and they operated on the theory that the more the troops were hardened to stand the cold in training the better they would be able to stand it on the battlefield. Brigadier General Philip R. Faymonville, who was head of the American supply mission in Moscow, told me that when he was military attaché there before the war he frequently saw maneuvers during which the soldiers suffered considerably. Apparently the theory of training was correct.

One thing about the Russian Army that many persons find hard to understand is why this army, which lost so much during the Finnish campaign in the winter of 1939-40, was able to do so well in winter warfare only two years later.

What happened in that Finnish war now seems to be clear. The Russians suddenly deciding that they had to protect Leningrad tried to force the Finns to make territorial concessions along the frontier. The verbal attempt failed and Russian leaders, knowing their country was strong and Finland relatively weak (their populations at that time were 180,000,000 vs. 3,500,000), suddenly decided to take the area by force of arms. It is reasonable to suppose that the government was poorly informed about Finland and that it believed the Finnish people would never support their government if the Finnish government went to war. So without any prep-

aration to speak of, the Red Army crossed the border. On at least two sectors Russian troops crossed behind bands playing the "International." Well, the government simply had miscalculated and in the first month (December of 1939) the Russian troops in the field lost heavily. They were beaten in almost every sector though they gained some territory everywhere. Then the Soviet government realized its mistake. The command was entrusted to Marshal Timoshenko and for more than a month the Russian divisions did nothing but train. They trained morning, noon and night for the specific tasks that faced them. Finally in the middle of February they opened their offensive. That offensive never stopped until Finland capitulated. The Russians had made a mistake in the early days. They never repeated it, and in the next year with Timoshenko as Peoples Commissar of Defense instead of Voroshilov the army went through an entirely new and different course of training. The Red Army of 1941 was not the Red Army of 1939.

But it had learned the hard way in that first month of its campaign against Finland for the Finns had trained for war and as fighting men they are as tough if not tougher than any people in the world. I often thought during the time I was in Russia of the months when I worked in Finland during the Finnish war, and whenever I saw a battlefield in Russia I thought of a battlefield in Finland. It was always essentially the same sight. In winter dead men look like wax figures, as Leland Stowe of the Chicago Daily News so ably described them. There is no blood. It is too cold for that. The bodies seem to have shriveled up until they are under-

size. When you look at them you have to keep telling yourself that once they were living men. It is not so in summer when the horror and suffering of battle impress themselves on your senses. But it seems that way in the cold.

The Russians certainly learned a lot about winter warfare in Finland. If the Germans learned anything, they failed to demonstrate it, unless it was contempt for the Russian as a soldier and that inaccurate lesson led them into nothing but trouble.

In Russia the Nazis found two countries, a Russia of summer and a Russia of winter. The former led only to tactical success, the latter to strategic disaster.

CHAPTER 14

Occupied Russia

ABOUT a hundred miles west of Moscow in rolling country a few miles north of the main highway to Riga is the small village of Shapkovo. At first glance there is little to distinguish it from other Russian villages. On either side of a winding dirt road you see a single row of two-story houses of unpainted, weather-stained wood. They are sturdily built and warm inside because of their large wood stoves and close-fitting storm windows. But Shapkovo today is not like other Russian villages. Shapkovo was occupied by the German Army during the first winter of the war and its people suffered horribly in that incredible manifestation of Nazi madness that accompanied the German retreat.

I visited Shapkovo that winter a few weeks after the Germans had been driven out and one afternoon I sat in one of its homes talking to about twenty of its men, women and children. They were peasants who worked the near-by collective farm, strong-looking people on whose regular features were written the stories of their lives. One of them was Ivan Tupitsin from the next village of Maleyer whose home had been burned to the ground. He was a young man, exempt from military service because of tuberculosis, thin-chested and old for his age. He sat there before his neighbors, dry-eyed and

tired-looking, and told me in a voice that at times was barely audible how six members of his family had died during the German retreat. The others in the room cried softly as he told the story they all knew so well.

Tupitsin said that on the night of December 24 three German soldiers came to his house and said the entire family would have to leave within ten minutes. They said clothing could be taken but no food. Outside it was snowing heavily and the wind blew sharp and cold.

"I asked them where we were to go and how we were to eat," he told me, "and they said, 'Ask Stalin.' "

With unblinking blue eyes but quivering mouth the man said that all the village's eighty people were driven out, among them himself, his wife, nine children from eight months to fifteen years, his blind father who was seventy-four years old and his mother. Tupitsin carried his youngest child in his arms. His wife carried another. They set off down the snow-covered road, women and children wailing and the men of the village trying to keep them quiet. Behind them walked German infantrymen, carrying their own equipment and food they had taken from the houses. Tupitsin's old mother moved slowly. Occasionally she slipped and fell. Once a German strode up and struck her with his hand, telling her to walk faster. That night, Tupitsin told me, while walking through the deep snow towards another village, one of his own children and four other children died of the cold. On the second day his three-year-old boy perished as the retreat continued.

Tupitsin, almost incoherently and gesturing to illustrate his words, talked rapidly now as if he were trying to get all the words out at one time.

That afternoon, he said, the Germans began to shoot the stragglers, perhaps believing that some were trying to get away and maddened anyway by their defeat before Moscow, the first they had ever suffered in this war. His wife and one daughter were shot down. The survivors began to run in terror. Two others were shot. Finally, the Germans passed on, having killed twenty-one and injured thirty-eight out of the eighty men, women and children who had left the village together. Seven were left of Tupitsin's family of thirteen. But they were all suffering from frost-bite.

When Tupitsin finished his story, I talked to a fifteen-year-old boy, Valentin Bichkov, son of one of Russia's guerrilla fighters. Sad-faced men, one of whom had tears in his eyes, listened as the boy spoke. He began with a smile, with enthusiasm and with an eager, strong voice, happy to have the older men and women listen to him talk, proud that he had played a small part in the war.

"I was taken prisoner by the Germans," Valentin said. "They pushed all the men in the village, and me, too, and locked us in a stable."

On the third day he said the older men were sent to the neighboring village of Lotoshino to work, while he and two other boys were freed. He went to the village of Turovo and lived there in a barn with three hundred other civilians. For months they all lived on three frozen potatoes a day. It grew cold. Now suddenly Valentin stopped talking and the smile passed from his face. He bit his lips to keep from crying and with an effort he tried to keep back the tears by putting a dirty fist to his eyes. But the tears came and he began to

sob. One of the older men and most of the women present began to wipe their eyes.

The boy, sitting there in his threadbare sheepskin coat with its worn sheepskin collar, found his voice again.

"My mother and little sister were killed," he said. "When the Germans left, they drove twenty people behind barbed wire and shot them."

That was all Valentin could say. He broke down, put his head on the table and covered his head with his hands. One of the women got up and with her arm around the boy took him into the next room. After that no one felt like talking for a while.

This little village of Shapkovo, like the other villages around it, lies in the agricultural district of Lotoshino, one of the fifty-eight districts in the Moscow region. No district in all Russia suffered as much as this one did. When I was there the chairman of the district council was still trying to count the dead, but many were lost in the snow. He knew of 949 men, women and children. He believed there were several hundred more. When the Germans moved out with the Red Army behind them, the chairman told me they not only killed but they burned. Before the occupation there were 6,000 homes in the district. After the Germans left, 2,886 had been completely destroyed and 1,827 were damaged, leaving only 1,287 homes untouched. The houses they did not burn were off the main roads.

The Russians of Lotoshino district told me that of the 949 civilians killed, thirteen were burned alive, 145

froze to death when they were forced out of their homes into the snow without adequate clothing, 507 were shot, scores were hanged, and others died during the forced retreat.

You begin to understand the suffering that went on when you enter the villages and see the ruins of houses, stores, schools, hospitals, barns and little factories. You begin to understand even more when you stand and stare at the gallows in Lotoshino village itself, where five men and one woman were hanged to death. I want to tell you what happened at that gallows as it was told to me by a woman I saw who was living in a cellar among the ruins of her home. And if the story sounds incredible, as atrocity stories often do to persons thousands of miles away, it is none the less real to the surviving members of the families of the dead. Telling it helps to explain why the men of the Red Army fought as they did.

The gallows, when I saw it, stood just off the highway. It consisted of two upright poles twenty-five feet high with a crossbar at the top twenty feet long. In peacetime rings hung from the crossbar, for this was a children's playground. When I stood there, the rings were gone and there were six lengths of bare copper wire with a rope noose at the end of each. The nooses were made by folding back the rope's end and binding it with a small piece of wire.

Six times the Germans marched a civilian to the playground, stood him or her on a board between two barrels, put the neck in the noose and kicked the barrels. This went on over a period of several months. Nor

were the bodies then cut down, and they swung there in the cold so that the sixth person to die saw five bodies swinging when he faced death.

The woman who died there was Tatiana Peskovatskaya, twenty-seven years old, head of the district's health department, whose husband was in the Red Army and whose son she had sent out of danger when the Germans approached. Feona Ivashova, the middle-aged woman who lived amidst the ruins of her cellar, made cold-proof by piling up charred bricks on the sides and cementing them with mud, saw Tatiana Peskovatskaya die. Sitting in her dark cellar she told me that the woman was dragged to the gallows where others were already hanging, their bodies stiff with the cold.

"Ask anyone here," she said the young woman cried out. "I am not guilty of anything. I have sent my boy away. My husband is at the front and I am not guilty of anything."

But the barrels were kicked away and she died. Feona Ivashova said the Germans then told the villagers they could take anything belonging to the woman — clothes or anything else. She said they took nothing.

While I was in Russia I went to many other villages but I never found anywhere such suffering as the people endured in the district of Lotoshino. In some areas the Germans had killed civilians, burned the villages and stolen the cattle and anything else they wanted. In others they retreated without harming the people. I think that the number of atrocities depended on the extent of the guerrilla warfare. When the guerrillas were at work, the Germans lost their heads and in retaliation killed, burned and plundered.

The German Góvernment had one firm idea when it ordered the invasion of the Soviet Union and that was that the majority of Russians would welcome freedom from Kremlin rule. It believed the people would not fight back unless they had to. It expected to impose its "New Order" without much opposition. But the Germans found out they had been mistaken. They learned as they went along that Russians, like people all over the world, prefer to live their lives in their own way and that if there is to be dictatorship they prefer to have their own countrymen as dictators rather than Germans or anyone else. The invading army first ran into difficulties when it tried to persuade men in the towns and villages to organize new municipal councils. Usually it found someone to do the job. He soon turned out to be a patriot who sabotaged German efforts or a traitor who was unable to get the cooperation of the people. In many cases hostility to the occupying troops was passive at the beginning, but it mounted week after week as the people struggled to oppose grain requisitions and the forced evacuation of able-bodied men and women to work in Germany or behind the German lines far from home. I believe that where that opposition remained passive few atrocities occurred. The Mayor of the town of Kotelnikovo told me that there the Germans burned no homes and killed no civilians. They did not even steal the cattle that were left behind.

But when the civilians began to fight back to protect their homes or their food or in any way began to assist guerrilla fighters in the neighborhood, the Germans were pitiless. Kotelnikovo had no guerrillas, or partisans as the Russians call them. It was not sacked. Loto-

shino west of Moscow had a partisan detachment of one hundred and three men. Its homes were burned and civilians killed.

There were some notable exceptions to this generality. The great city of Kharkov had no partisans, but there the Germans ruled with a cruelty that was seldom equaled in other parts of occupied Russia. I think the reason is that its strong-hearted Ukrainian population suffered so much from lack of food and forced evacuations that it began to fight back in its own passive way. Kharkov when I saw it towards the end of the second winter of the war, in the few weeks that the Red Army was able to hold it against German counterattack, was the grimmest sight in all Russia. Its weary people were thin and hungry. Half its large buildings, its railroad stations, perhaps a third of its homes, its water supply system and its factories had been destroyed by the Germans in retreat. And scattered about in the streets, on the sidewalks, in courtyards and up back alleys were literally thousands and thousands of empty wine and liquor bottles, champagne from some of the famous vineyards of France, wines from the Burgundy and Bordeaux country, Mosels and Rhine wines, the strong vodka-like Steinhager from Germany.

Russian guerrilla fighters seldom entered large towns or cities like Kharkov. For the most part they kept to the woods and swamps, making occasional night sorties into small villages and whenever possible attacking German sentries, transport and command posts. Their assignment was three-fold: to cripple the enemy as much as possible by blowing up bridges, tossing hand grenades at enemy trucks, cutting telephone wire and

blowing up ammunition dumps; to act as advance scouts for the Red Army and supply information on troop concentrations and other military movements; and to represent the long arm of Soviet law in German-controlled territory. Their last function was their least known abroad, but Russians living in occupied Russia knew that cooperation with the Germans might be reported to the partisans who in their turn would either retaliate directly or report the activities to the police in Moscow for punishment after the war.

The partisan detachments were highly organized. In many of them there were officers trained by the Red Army, and the only persons who had the right to join them were members of the Communist Party or persons carefully selected by the party for guerrilla warfare. They all wore plain clothes and operated in groups of from thirty to a hundred and fifty men. In every case the detachments were selected before the actual invasion and food was stored for their use.

Lotoshino's detachment was typical of them all. It consisted of 103 middle-aged men, among them forty-nine-year-old Sergei Aborin, a tall, light-haired fighter who was head of the executive committee of the district council or soviet. Their commander was another party member, Ivan Rozov, who in time of peace directed the district's light industries. In the first summer of the war, when the Germans were driving on Lotoshino, headed for Moscow, these men met frequently and planned their campaign. They had two jobs. One was to take charge of the scorched-earth policy in their district which meant the evacuation to the rear of all tractors and heavy machinery, large stores of grain, the

cattle owned by the collective farms and as many civilians as transport permitted. Their other job was to select a base of operations for future guerrilla fighting and to store near the hiding place as much food as they thought they would need, as well as light arms and ammunition.

The Germans got to Lotoshino on October 13 but on October 12 the partisans left their homes, saying good-bye to their wives and children and taking with them as much equipment as they could carry. Their identity was Lotoshino's most closely guarded secret for by this time all Russia knew that Germans not only hanged guerrillas but frequently shot members of their families in their attempt to stop partisan activities. The party knew who they were. So did the army. Their wives knew but the children were not told. On the day they took to the woods, one of the band, Ivan Soloviev, stayed behind. Two hours before the Germans arrived he cut the telephone wires in Lotoshino village and then joined the detachment.

For six days the group laid low. On the night of the seventh day they left their hiding place, taking with them their twelve horses, four machine guns and their rifles and grenades. They hiked for twelve miles, keeping far from all settlements and all roads. About midnight they sent scouts ahead to observe a crossroads. The scouts came back after an hour to report there was a steady stream of armed men moving to the east, tanks, trucks, artillery and infantry. The partisans decided there was little they could do that night so they returned to their camp which was nine miles from any highway. After that they sent out scouts every night

to watch the roads and keep an eye on the villages. When they knew they had a better than even chance, they attacked, smashing trucks, firing from the woods, once in a while blowing up an ammunition dump. They always were back in their camp before dawn. Soon the Germans began to hunt for them. Strong punitive detachments were sent into the forests. The sentries guarding the camp hid when they came close after reporting to the group's commander. All fires would be put out and the men would conceal themselves in ravines and caves. After a time their work grew dangerous. They were unable to build fires by day for planes scoured the area looking for smoke. At night the smoke from their stoves was diffused by placing branches over the chimneys. Then the commander decided the woods were too accessible to the Germans. He ordered the camp moved into the swamps. There they were safe from observation for the Germans seldom dared send in to look for them.

In the swamps the men lived underground, but as the days grew colder their suffering increased. Some were without winter overcoats. Several partisans by this time were sent to make contact with other partisan bands and from the Volokolomsk and Visokovsky guerrillas they obtained thirty pairs of felt boots or valenkis, the warmest things to wear on your feet in a Russian winter. But thirty pairs were not enough to go around so they were used in rotation with sentries and night marauders getting first call. Food began to run low except for cabbage and bread of which they had enough.

One night two partisans set an ambush for a truck. Instead of a truck, however, the Russians found them-

selves face to face with a busload of German officers. The bus was damaged and when the officers tried to climb out the guerrillas opened fire with rifles and tossed a few grenades. A second and a third busload of officers came up and rammed into the obstruction on the road. These buses too were damaged but the Germans poured out, forcing the guerrillas to flee. Another time some partisans killed a motorcycle rider. They lugged the machine several miles and then tried for hours to start the motor. Failing, they destroyed it and returned to camp.

These men told me, after they returned to Lotoshino following the German retreat, that in ninety-nine days they had killed two hundred and seven Germans for sure and perhaps three hundred more. They had destroyed twenty truckloads of ammunition and twenty other vehicles. They had followed a German plane to a place where it had made a forced landing and burned it.

But they had accomplished something more important than this. By their presence in the area they had forced the Germans to double and triple their number of sentries and to employ hundreds of troops as punitive detachments. Towards the end of the Nazi occupation a German linesman sent out to repair telephone wire would be accompanied by several guards.

This war between the Germans and the partisans was a steady war to the death. No quarter was asked or given on either side. The partisans took no prisoners for their part and expected to be hanged if they were captured. It was bitter fighting. On one side were Russians who knew the countryside and were fighting in the neighborhood of their homes. On the other side were

the Germans angered by defeat and maddened by fear and irritation at men who fired at them from ambush by night.

Late in the first winter of the war I talked with the men of another partisan detachment who were operating southwest of Moscow in the district around Malo-Yaroslavetz. They too were back at their homes by the time I saw them for the region recently had been reoccupied by the Red Army. Their leader was Leonid Baidek, twenty-six years old. His wife and sister-in-law, he told me, had been killed by the Germans who had discovered somehow that Baidek was a partisan. Perhaps they had wrung the information from a prisoner. In Baidek's detachment there were thirty-three men. Nineteen of them survived. Seven disappeared. Four were killed in battle. Three were hanged in the village of Mashkovo.

Baidek was very proud of one night's work when his men stormed a settlement during a blizzard and freed two hundred Russian soldiers from a German prison compound. I found that most partisans were proud of the work they were doing, and perhaps derived from it more real satisfaction than most soldiers get from war. One was Ivan Skachov, thirty-eight years old, a peasant from a village near Mozhaïsk. In his band of sixty persons were two women. They said they accounted for one hundred and fifty Germans. Another was Boris Tabunov, thirty-five years old, a former high school teacher. His detachment of eighty-nine men operated on both sides of the Moscow-Leningrad highway, between Klin and Solnechnogorsk. He held the rank of senior lieutenant in the army. He was most proud of

the destruction of a long bridge on the Klin-Volokolomsk road that was blown up about the time the Red Army was launching its counter-offensive.

"German infantry and equipment piled up on the road waiting for the bridge to be repaired," he said. "The Red Air Force came. Go to that highway today and you'll see what those planes did."

Lieutenant Tabunov's group, like other detachments, often got food from the villages. Women carried it to his camp at night. Once in a while his men brought down a deer and the venison was the only meat they ever had. On the whole, however, it was a hard life. That was a cold winter.

I once talked to a woman who had been a partisan. She was Evdokia Shumova, strong-looking, about forty years old. She had joined up as a cook in order to be near her seventeen-year-old son who was in the Otashkhovsky detachment. Then one night her son failed to come back from a raid. No one had seen him fall. He was simply listed as missing. The mother set out to look for him in the morning. Being a woman she could move about with some freedom and without the certain knowledge that capture meant the gallows. She went first to the place where the skirmish had taken place but she did not find her son's body. Then she went into several of the villages but failed to hear anything about him. She looked everywhere, talked to anyone she could trust and in time she picked up a lot of information that was of value to the partisans. She never found her son, but she became the detachment's best informant.

Some day perhaps the Russians will tell the full story of their partisans. It should make fascinating reading

for the suffering they endured and the courage they showed were held up as examples to all Russian soldiers. They were a small part of the Red Army but an important part. The vast terrain with its huge forests and broad swamps favored their use. The Red Army owes a great deal to its guerrilla fighters.

CHAPTER 15

Back of the Red Army

I DOUBT whether any army in the world has ever received such total support from its civilian population as the Red Army received in the first two years of the German invasion. Other countries may have produced more arms, ammunition and other military supplies, but when you think of Russia's industrial, agricultural and transportation difficulties, it did remarkably well. Every civilian enterprise was subordinated to the armed forces. The manufacture of all consumers goods was stopped completely. In the second year you could not buy anything in a Moscow store that had not been manufactured in peacetime. Clothing was almost impossible to buy. You began to see men, women and children on the streets with worn-out shoes, shabby suits and threadbare dresses. Travel by rail was almost out of the question for anyone who was not in the army or navy or not traveling on a specific government assignment. There was a great shortage of rationed foods and unrationed foodstuffs were sold by the peasants in the open market at exorbitant prices. The factories worked for the Red Army. So did the farms, all transportation facilities and most hospitals.

Russia in wartime was governed by a dictatorship

anyway you like to look at it. Elections were suspended. All orders came from above. Everything that was said or done was designed to meet first the absolutely minimum needs of the civilian population and then the maximum needs of the army. If civilians had to die of starvation in order to keep the army in the field, they died, as they died in Leningrad.

It was not that the government wanted it that way or that the people wanted it that way. It simply had to be that way if Russia were to survive. The slogan was "Everything for the Front," and just about everything went to the front. The troops ate relatively well and were adequately clothed, and, if there were instances in which detachments ran short of arms or ammunition or other needed supplies, the explanation was that the country's factories, where men and women worked twelve, fourteen and sixteen hours a day, could not produce any more. The government had dictatorial powers and ruled dictatorially. There was no appeal from its decisions and all of its decisions were designed to do "Everything for the Front." A civilian who felt he was not being treated justly was out of luck. He had the right to complain but there was no one to complain to. In August and September of 1942 white-collar workers in Moscow did not receive the meat to which they were entitled according to their ration cards. The meat just was not available. And the man who complained too loudly or too long might be suspected of an unwillingness to do his part for the benefit of the whole. That might involve police investigation, which is something to be avoided in the Soviet Union if you want to continue to live with your family.

All this was strictly according to the Stalinist conception of government in wartime. It brought about a great deal of civilian suffering but at least it served to strengthen the armed forces.

I have never been in Russia in time of peace so I know nothing about that part of Soviet life. I have never seen Moscow without a blackout. I have never seen unrationed clothing in the stores or unrationed food, and I have never seen the country when a civilian could travel from one province to another with nothing else required but the price of a ticket. To me Moscow is a city that is dark at night, without public restaurants of any kind, without taxis, with an inadequate number of street cars and buses, with poorly-lighted homes that are not sufficiently heated in winter. I am writing then only about the Moscow and the Russia that I know.

The only civilians in the Soviet Union who escaped mobilization for industry, agriculture, transportation or employment in some government service were children under fourteen years old and physically-handicapped men and women. Everyone else was subject to call. Literally millions of boys fourteen, fifteen and sixteen years old and thousands of girls fifteen and sixteen years old were mobilized into employment in trade schools. There they worked six and seven hours a day at factory benches, making sub-machine guns, hand grenades, mortars and parts. Sometimes the schools were situated in their home towns. Often they were hundreds of miles away and the children were housed in barracks. Other children at fourteen, fifteen and sixteen were subject to mobilization for work on the country's collective farms, wherever they were needed most.

After training they took the places of men released for service in the armed forces.

I do not believe this work was much of a hardship for the children. As a rule they ate better than they would have at home. Through their places of employment they had a better chance of being adequately clothed. For there was food and clothing for persons who produced, little for non-producers. Russian children then worked as their mothers and fathers worked, and they were paid for their work. They also received military training as their mothers and fathers did, one hundred and ten hours a year, or about two hours a week, about the same as our National Guard trained before it was mobilized into national service. This training varied. Some boys and girls trained as infantrymen. They learned to shoot the rifle, sub-machine gun and machine gun. They learned to dig earthworks, to conceal themselves from enemy fire, obey orders and some of the means of fighting enemy tanks. Others were trained as artillerymen. Thousands were taught how to drive trucks. All received first-aid training.

During the second winter the Red Army lowered its age limit from eighteen years old to seventeen. Then thousands and thousands of boys and many girls were called into active service after their seventeenth birthday. I never heard of them being sent into the lines at that age. The idea was that the army would have one full year in which to train them and that by the time they were eighteen they were old enough and trained for combat. Again, I think it was not that the government wanted it that way, but it had to be that way for Russia's manpower was not inexhaustible.

In the factories labor had few of the rights that it enjoys in American industry. Strikes not only were outlawed but the persons who incited them or joined in them were certain to be charged (and convicted) of sabotage, treason and counter-revolution. So far as I know no one ever tried to strike. Russians knew too well what the consequences would be. No employee had the right to resign from a defense plant. Heavy fines were imposed for being only a few minutes late for work, which meant that in Moscow most workers had to start from home one or two hours beforehand because of transport delays. It also took them an hour or more to get home at night so it was a common sight in Moscow after dark to see long lines of workmen waiting for a place on a bus or street car. Every man and woman was required to produce so much a day. That was called his "norm" and the person who failed to do his norm was in for trouble. The "norm" usually consisted of turning out so many bolts a day, so many parts, so much coal, or a fixed quantity of something. Wages were paid according to piecework, not by the hour. Consequently, high wages went to the skilled and physically-strong workmen who could produce rapidly and stay on the job for long hours. The unskilled or physically weak suffered. In the factories were what the Russians call labor unions, but in practice they were more like employees benefit societies than trade unions. They did not fight to improve conditions of labor. That would have been contrary to Soviet ideas.

In Russia the means of production, therefore the factories, are owned by the state, or as the Stalinist says, by the people. A strike against the factory management

is a strike against the people. A strike against the people is a crime against the people. By the same token wages, hours and other labor conditions being fixed by the state are fixed by the people. To complain against them is to complain against the people. The Red Army, therefore, had little cause to worry about strikes or labor complaints. If it needed armaments it could be sure that the state would increase the hours of labor. It could also be sure there would be no kickback.

The army never had to worry about transport if transport existed. In Russia in wartime there was no such thing as a privately-owned truck or automobile. The state owned them all and what the army needed the army took after government services had received their minimum requirements. Incidentally, in Russia there was a chauffeur for every car. No factory owner or important government official ever drove his own machine. The chauffeur drove it and took care of it. The practice was so contagious that even the few Moscow correspondents who owned their own automobiles had chauffeurs.

As for food the army always got the best and the most, except for a few highly-placed officials in the Kremlin, outstanding artists and scientists and important leaders of the Communist Party. After the army came workers in defense factories, then white-collar workers, lastly physically-handicapped dependents and children.

The same was true for housing conditions. When the war broke out all civilian construction was stopped, and civilian construction in Moscow really means state construction for non-military needs. The government,

for example, stopped work on the fantastic Palace of the Soviets which was to have been an enormous steel and concrete building taller than the Empire State Building in New York. The war found its foundation completed and its steel girders in place up to the fifth story. This was the Soviet's great dream, and yet after ten months of war an order was issued to tear it down and use the structural steel for military purposes. Similarly, when the war broke out there was a great deal of apartment house construction going on in Moscow. It was badly needed for housing conditions were really inadequate. Most families resided in one-room apartments and shared a common kitchen and toilet facilities with three or four other families also living in one-room apartments. But when the invasion came all work was stopped, and today if you go to Moscow you will see many unfinished apartment houses, some that could be completed in a few weeks time. But the slogan was "Everything for the Front," and all steel, concrete and other materials went to the army.

If the army needed a civilian hospital, it took it over, and if there were shortages of medical supplies in the army you could be certain that medicines for civilian needs were sometimes non-existent.

There were countless other manifestations of civilian sacrifices to military needs. Every man and woman saw them every day of the war. He saw them in the morning when he waited an hour to get a bus or streetcar for work. He saw them at meal times. He saw them when he took two hours to get home from work at night after fourteen or more hours at the factory. He saw them two or three times a year when work continued

on the great national holidays that in peacetime had been days of rest and celebration.

The pressure was on the civilian all the time. If he did his work well he was paid for it, though there was little he could buy for his money except food in the open market where the peasants charged more than the worker could afford. If he did his job poorly, there was an investigation to determine whether the reason was unwillingness to work or plain incompetence. The former brought severe punishment or discharge and one was as bad as the other because the Soviet Union is run according to the principle: "he who does not work, neither shall he eat." The loss of a ration card could mean starvation. The entire press and radio of the nation were geared to support the government program which was based on the theory that civilian needs should be subordinated to military requirements. Competitions between factories, factory departments, even individual workmen were encouraged, and the goal was production. Medals and other decorations were given for excellent work. Every propaganda trick that could produce more goods for the army was used.

It seems little wonder then that the government was able to organize the country's wealth and civilian strength to the extent that it did. It had absolute control over all means of production and distribution. It ruled over a people that by nature was patriotic and by education disciplined. Behind it was the most powerful police force in the world, constantly enforcing its decisions and punishing offenders.

On the whole I think it did its job well. At times it caused unnecessary suffering but its program was clear

and it was ruthless in following it. I can recall many times when riding on Russian trains how civilians were pushed around by officials who should have showed more courtesy and more kindness. On my first trip from Archangel to Kuibeshev, we occupied the last car of a long train. One afternoon we heard a terrifying scream from the platform. When we went out to investigate we found that the conductor was trying to throw off the platform a man who had hitched a ride at the last station. The train was going twenty miles an hour on that cold November day but the conductor had the fellow down on the last step and was doing his best to kick him off with his feet. There always seemed to be things like that in Russia, but side by side with them were many examples of courtesy and kindness, usually by the people towards other people rather than by government officials towards the people.

But despite the ruthlessness that was evident every day, the people of Russia were not unhappy during the war to the extent that you might expect.

Almost everyone I knew had a father, son or brother killed, missing or wounded at the front. Almost everyone had lost from fifteen to twenty-five pounds in weight. Their housing conditions were deplorable. They lacked the clothes they needed. They were tired after a day's work and cold at home in winter. But I can think of no sacrifice they were not willing to make for the army. They hated the Germans with everything they had, and most of them were satisfied in the knowledge they were doing the best they could. If you could have walked down the streets of Moscow in the first two years of the war, you would have seen a tired-looking

people, wearing old clothes, but still you would have been struck by the fact that they were laughing and talking the way people do all over the world in time of peace. Little boys played in the streets as if there were no war on. Their mothers and fathers went to the movies or ballet or opera or theater and talked between the acts as if when the show was over they would go home to a comfortable apartment where the food was good and their friends would visit them. Life was hard but life was bearable, and I am sure that few Russian soldiers doubted that the civilians were supporting them with every ounce of their strength.

CHAPTER 16

The Battle for Stalingrad—I

THE GREAT battle of 1942 was the Battle for Stalingrad which began as the Battle for Moscow had begun with General Field Marshal von Bock commanding the German forces and Marshal Timoshenko commanding the Russians. After the winter with its unusually heavy snowfall there was the inevitable period of thaw with its mud, slush, rain and impassable roads so that the campaign did not begin until late in the second week in May. In those days everyone realized that the German Army, though it had suffered humiliating and bitter defeat before the Russian capital, was still the stronger force. Consequently it came as something of a surprise when the Soviet Information Bureau announced on May 13 that it was Timoshenko who had launched an offensive. He headed for Kharkov, probably the strongest point on the whole German line, drove forward on a 70-mile front and at the end of the fifth day of battle his divisions had advanced from twelve to thirty-seven miles. On the 19th von Bock counterattacked the Russian left flank in the Iziurm-Barvenkovo sector south of Kharkov.

In the next few days there was a mad scramble. Von Bock was advancing on the south and Timoshenko in the north until his troops actually got into Kharkov

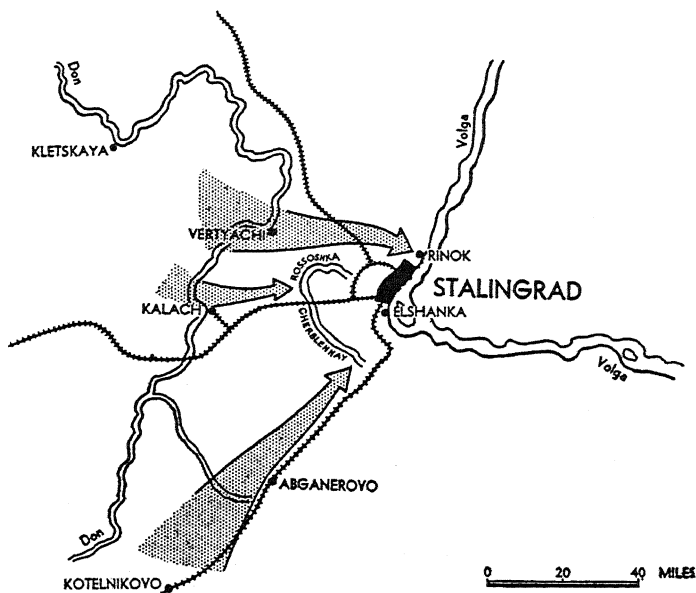
itself. But the Russians could not hold out against the men and material sent against them, and on May 30, both Moscow and Berlin announced that the battle was over, both capitals claiming victory. Moscow said that the Russian offensive there was only a diversion to forestall a German drive on Rostov, gateway to the Caucasus and Russian oil, by thirty infantry and six tank divisions, and that the Red Army had not intended to capture Kharkov anyway. It reported that the diversion had succeeded and that the Germans had lost 90,000 men killed and prisoners, 540 tanks, 1,511 guns, 200 planes. Perhaps the story of what happened at the end can be guessed from the curious figures Moscow listed for its own casualties, 5,000 dead and 70,000 missing. From what happened later it is reasonable to accept the Russian claim that it was trying to forestall a German offensive, but Moscow was wrong in assuming that it had been successful for only a little more than a week later, on June 10, the Germans launched their summer offensive that was to take them all the way to Stalingrad. It is possible, however, that Timoshenko's unexpected move in the middle of May did upset the German timetable.

Von Bock built up his offensive slowly, striking first due east from Kharkov. After a nasty fight his divisions forced the Northern Donetz River and on June 25 they fought their way into Kupiansk for a total gain of about seventy miles. About that time he attacked in the north, from Byelgorod and Kursk, and the Kursk column in one powerful lunge covered 120 miles until it was stopped along the Don ten miles west of Voronezh which is on the Moscow-Rostov railway.

The Kupiansk forces then struck east again and a little north to cut the same railway at Rossosh south of Voronezh while the Byelgorod army in the middle fanned out between Voronezh and Rossosh. Now von Bock struck in the south. One mighty column raced for Millerovo on the railway south of Rossosh while the bulk of the southern forces struck southeast, outflanked Rostov and captured it on July 27. The troops that had taken or by-passed Rostov headed for the Caucasus to the southeast while the divisions that had cut the Voronezh-Rostov railway struck out across the open steppe country towards the Volga and Stalingrad.

Timoshenko pulled out as fast as his transport would allow. He knew rightly that his army was in no condition to trade punches with the mechanized German army on the flat fields between the railway and the Don, first of all because he did not have enough tanks and secondly because he did not have the planes. The Germans, by this time having captured Sevastopol in the Crimea, had concentrated almost their entire air force in Russia along this one sector of the line. As he pulled across the steppes from the Voronezh-Rostov railway to the great bend of the Don one hundred and fifty miles to the east, Timoshenko threw in one of his reserve armies to check the German advance. This was the 62nd Army commanded by Lieutenant General Vasili Chuikov.

It was clear that the Germans could not be stopped until they got to the Don at least, possibly until they reached Stalingrad on the Volga. But Chuikov's army was there to act as a "meat grinder," while Timoshenko was going to swing his entire forces not east



THE BATTLE FOR STALINGRAD

Arrows show three lunges that took von Bock into Stalingrad.

towards Stalingrad but northeast between Stalingrad and Moscow. By now the Russians guessed that the Germans wanted Stalingrad only as a stepping-stone to a drive northward that would put them in behind Moscow. Timoshenko's forces would block that move even if Stalingrad fell. Later, after the Battle for Stalingrad was over, I talked to General Chuikov about the fighting in the steppes, and he described it as a battle of exhaustion. He did check the Germans and give the people of Stalingrad time to be evacuated or to help build fortifications, but he could not stop them. The Germans were moving in two large columns, one north

of the railroad that runs through the steppes straight to Stalingrad, and the other some miles to the south toward Tsimlanskaya and Kotelnikovo. The idea was that they would meet for the final assault.

The southern column finally crossed the Don near Tsimlanskaya and headed for Kotelnikovo which it captured in early August. The Russians then withdrew all along the line to the east bank of the Don. After losing the battle of Kotelnikovo, which is 110 miles southwest of Stalingrad, the Russians retreated in the direction of Stalingrad and tried to fortify themselves on the banks of the Mishkov River, midway between Kotelnikovo and Stalingrad.

On August 17 then the Russian lines formed a semi-circle around Stalingrad that roughly followed the east banks of the Mishkov and Don Rivers. Von Bock attacked again, sending three columns in to crack the Russian positions. From the southwest, that is from the direction of Kotelnikovo and roughly along the railroad that leads from this town to Stalingrad, he sent a force that consisted of two tank divisions, one motorized division and three infantry divisions, perhaps 75,000 men. In the center just above Kalach which is due west of Stalingrad he attacked with three more infantry divisions, about 40,000 to 45,000 men. His third blow came from northwest of Stalingrad, around the town of Vertyachi, and here he sent to battle two tank divisions, two motorized divisions and six infantry divisions, about 115,000 men.

And so von Bock struck in three directions with four tank divisions, three motorized divisions and twelve infantry divisions, totaling more than 230,000 men. He

only had about forty miles to go to reach Stalingrad.

The battle began in the afternoon of August 17. Von Bock's northern column, heavily supported by aviation, forced the Don, broke through Russian defenses near Vertyachi and came out on August 23 on the west bank of the Volga, only a few miles north of Stalingrad, near the villages of Rinok and Erzovka. Stalingrad was now cut off from the north, but this column was unable to direct much of its strength towards the city itself because north of its positions was the bulk of Timoshenko's army and he kept up constant pressure towards the south.

Incidentally, the Soviet Information Bureau never made public this breakthrough until many months later, not in fact until the siege of Stalingrad had been raised. But it was an important tactical achievement for von Bock because from that time on the defenders of Stalingrad had only one line of communications with the rest of the Soviet Union and that was from the east, across the wide waters of the Volga.

Meanwhile, the Germans were attacking with their columns that were coming from the west and southwest, and soon it became clear to the Russian command that it would be impossible to stand and fight along its positions on the east bank of the Don and the east bank of the Mishkov Rivers. So on August 31 it ordered a retreat to a new line which went along the east banks of the narrow Rossoshka and Chervlianoi Rivers. Then the Germans had not forty miles to go but about eighteen.

Von Bock attacked again, hurling his forces mainly in the center in the direction of the little railroad village of Basargino, and again he broke through the Russian

line, forcing a general Russian withdrawal on September 3 to within ten miles of Stalingrad. I have seen the country over which this fighting took place. It is gently rolling farming land, open country, without timber that a defender can use for fortifications. Now the real Battle for Stalingrad was on. The Russian 62d Army was on the outskirts of the city, and the city on August 26 had suffered one of the most frightful bombings of the war.

No American or any non-Russian can attempt to describe what happened in the next few weeks, nor indeed what happened in the next six months around this Volga city for the simple reason that only Russians were there. The correspondents asked many times for permission to go down there and they seldom even got an answer that could be called as much as a refusal. Almost every day from now on a British or American correspondent would visit the press department in the Foreign Office and ask the department chief, Mikolai Palgunov, for permission to make the trip. And always the correspondent was told that the request would be considered. But not one of them ever was allowed into Stalingrad until the last German had been killed or taken prisoner. Similarly, no military attaché saw the battle. But the bloodshed and the suffering must have been horrible in those days. On September 3 von Bock started out with only ten miles to go. He covered that distance by September 14 and on the afternoon of the 14th one of his armored columns broke into the town and seized the Mamai Kurgan, the height which centuries before a Tartar chieftain had used as a burial

ground and from whose peak the Germans dominated the city.

But about ten days before Colonel General Andrei Eremenko, now called commander of the Stalingrad Front, had made his preparations. He ordered General Chuikov to transfer his army artillery to the east bank of the river where it would be safe from tank raids and still able to shell German positions.

General Chuikov had already prepared positions for the divisions of his 62d Army, and Eremenko had summoned reserve divisions from the deep rear. One of these reserve divisions was the 13th Guards Rifle Division commanded by thirty-eight-year-old Major General Alexander Rodimtsev, which had started the war as part of the 3d Parachute Corps but had since been turned into an infantry force. Rodimtsev was ordered to join the 62d Army but at the time he was north of Stalingrad and cut off from the city by the German column that had broken through to the Volga. So he got the trucks and started moving east. He crossed first from the west to the east bank of the river; then in a hard, dusty ride he turned south and brought his division up to Stalingrad from the rear. First they had to cross the river which here is about a mile or more wide. Eremenko had the boats and under cover of Russian artillery Rodimtsev's division started across.

But already the Germans had the Mamai Kurgan and from its ridges they began to shell Rodimtsev's men. They kept on going, however, although in order to land on the Stalingrad side the division commander had to split his forces, sending two regiments to the

north and one to the south. Once on the other side the regiments fought until they were formed in one unbroken line, and then the division charged the Mamai Kurgan. That charge of Rodimtsev's guards has been widely publicized in the Soviet Union as one of the most heroic charges of the war. Thousands of men died, but the hill was cleared.

And so it was that the street fighting began that was to cost so many lives and destroy the once-beautiful city of more than 600,000 men, women and children. The siege was on.

CHAPTER 17

The Battle for Stalingrad—II

THE SIEGE of Stalingrad perhaps was the most inadequately-reported battle of modern times for at no time was it clear to the world just where the Russians were and where the Germans were. Long after it was over, however, the details began to come out and only then did it become clear that in fact the Germans really had Stalingrad. They had its hills. They had its principal buildings, its public squares, its factories and its dwellings. At two places within the city itself they controlled the river bank.

But though they held most of Stalingrad the Germans never could drive the Russians from the high bluff that rises up from the Volga. Nor could they go in and get the Russians because of the fighting heart of the defenders and because of the constant threat to the German flanks from other Soviet forces to the northwest and south of the city. In those days the only part of Stalingrad that the Russians controlled was the bluff itself and a strip of land above the bluff that varied from one hundred to a thousand yards from the river. But their heavy artillery was safe on the far bank and they dug themselves into the bluff so that no flame or metal could drive them out. I saw this bluff after the

battle and it was an astonishing sight. It was pitted with deep dugouts, some of which went a hundred feet into its side.

But even down in there at times the noise and vibration from shellfire and bomb explosions were so heavy that an ordinary water glass would shatter as it lay on the table. The dugouts were connected by telephone. In the command posts there was electric light, but where the troops lived they had fashioned rude lamps by filling an empty shell case with oil, inserting a wick and then flattening the top of the case so that the metal would hold the wick in place. That is where the soldiers lived. That is where the doctors worked.

The bluff was held by the men of General Chuikov's 62d Army. Facing it was the German 6th Army, a veteran of France, commanded by Colonel General Friedrich von Paulus, a tall, thin-lipped man whose right eye twitched from a nervous affliction. Von Paulus was fifty-two years old. Chuikov, a large man with thick, black hair and a broad mouth that exposed a double row of gold teeth when he laughed, was forty-two.

About the time the battle began Stalin reorganized the high command. He created a Headquarters of the Supreme Command with himself as supreme commander-in-chief, and replaced Timoshenko. Timoshenko's place was taken by Zhukov, the same general who had replaced Timoshenko during the Battle for Moscow.

Zhukov had command of the entire theatre of operations. Under him was General Eremenko as commander of the Stalingrad Front, which meant command of the 62d Army inside Stalingrad as well as Russian troops

to the north and south of the city. Chuikov in command of the 62d Army was one of the most colorful army commanders in the Soviet Union. Four times during the siege of Stalingrad, which began on September 14 when the Germans first entered the city and ended on November 19 when Zhukov launched his counter-offensive, Chuikov was forced to move his headquarters from one dugout to another. On one day alone, October 14, sixty-one officers and men of his staff were killed. And yet at no time did he abandon his divisions and move to the far bank of the Volga.

Like many army commanders in Russia, Chuikov was too young to fight in the last war. He was born in the Tula province south of Moscow in 1900, the son of a peasant. When he was twelve years old he was apprenticed to a mechanic in one of Tula's famous arms shops. He was seventeen years old at the time the revolution broke out in 1917 and like many boys of his age he was in it up to the teeth. Soon he became a member of the Communist Party. He joined the Red Army when it was organized in 1918. Chuikov then was a private but he was big, strong and tough and it was not long after his early battles near Tsaritsyn (the old name for Stalingrad) that he was given command of a company. The following year he was sent to Siberia to take part in the fighting against Admiral Kolchak. He was then nineteen years old and commander of a regiment. In 1920 he returned from the Far East to take part in the short war against Poland.

After the three-year period of the civil war, Chuikov was picked to go to military school and to learn from books the things he had not been able to learn in the

field. Then came service with troops, the Frunze Military Academy, and when the Soviet Union invaded Finland in 1939 he was on the Karelian Isthmus as commander of one of the armies storming the Mannerheim Line. In the early part of the war with Germany he led an army on the Central Front before being transferred to the South Front. Only once had he ever been out of Russia, in the days before the war when he was chief of the Russian Military Mission to Chiang Kai-shek in China.

That was the type of man who commanded the 62d Army in Stalingrad. He had with him some of the country's finest divisions. One already mentioned was the 13th Guards Rifle Division of General Rodimtsev. Another was the 39th Guards Rifle Division of Siberian troops led by Major General Stepan Guriev. Four other divisions won the title of Guards during the battle: the 70th commanded by Major General Ivan Ludnikov, the 75th of Major General Vasili Gorishni, the 78th of Major General Alexander Skvortsov and the 79th led by Major General Nikolai Batiuk.

I never was able to find out the numbers of Chuikov's remaining divisions, but the last names of some of his other division commanders were Gorokhov Gurtiev (not the same as the Guriev mentioned above), Bolvinov, Sarayev, Zholudev and Batov. We know then that Chuikov commanded at least twelve divisions. I think he led many more because the army held a front sixteen miles long and the division commanders I talked to said their sectors were under a mile wide.

On the other side General von Paulus started with an army of four tank divisions, three motorized divi-

sions and twelve infantry divisions. Before the end of the siege one of the tank divisions was pulled out, but von Paulus was given three more infantry divisions and a Rumanian cavalry division. At the height of the battle he commanded twenty-two divisions, about 300,000 combat troops.

It will be remembered that on August 23 the Germans sent one attacking column that broke through to the Volga just north of Stalingrad close to the village of Rinok. On September 14 when an armored force broke into the streets of the city another column attacking to the south came out on the Volga near the village of Elshanka which is just south of Stalingrad.

Stalingrad is often described as a city forty miles long strung out along the high west bank of the river, but strictly speaking it is only twenty miles long, from below Rinok on the north and above Elshanka on the south, and it was a 20-mile front that the 62d Army tried to hold. The German 6th Army that faced it could see five important military objectives, and in turn it hammered at all five of them, though it never could use all of its twenty-two divisions at one time because it had to keep an eye on the Russians north and south of the city. As a rule it attacked with anywhere from two to seven divisions, but it supported them with hundreds of planes and hundreds of siege guns.

Chuikov's command post was always in a dugout. With him was his chief of staff, thirty-nine-year-old Colonel Nikolai Krylov, who had been chief of staff of the armies that defended Odessa and Sevastopol in the Crimea, one of the best staff officers in the Red Army. Incidentally, Krylov has a brother in the American

Army, though they have not seen each other or been in communication with each other since they were children. Chuikov kept his army artillery on the far side of the river where it was commanded by another thirty-nine-year-old officer, Colonel Nikolai Pozharsky.

I have never been able to get a clear picture in my own mind of exactly what happened throughout the sixty-six days of the siege, from September 14 to November 19. The Russians and the Germans so far have withheld many of the details. But I did sit with a group of correspondents for several hours in Chuikov's headquarters and hear his side of the story, and we were able to talk to several of the division commanders, Generals Guriev and Rodimtsev. From published accounts I have heard of several other divisions, so I will simply give the story as I have heard it and read it.

Picture a Stalingrad twenty miles long scattered along the west bank of the Volga, and picture the five military objectives that the German General von Paulus tried to achieve. They were, from north to south, the Stalingrad Tractor Plant, the Barricades Machine Construction Factory, the Red October Metallurgical Plant, the height called the Mamai Kurgan and the business center of the city.

All five were right along the river, next to the high bluff. The first was the tractor plant in the north, a huge plant with the river on one side and a large workers settlement of several thousand small houses on the other. Next came the Barricades factory about a mile away, which like the tractor plant faced the river on the east and its own workers' settlements on the west. In the center of the city was the Red October factory;

a little further to the south was the hill and on the far south was Stalingrad's business district.

Chuikov told us that he knew in September that the high command was planning a counter-offensive, and that his army's assignment was to hold Stalingrad and in so doing to hold the German 6th Army where it could be struck in the counter-offensive. He also knew that he had barely enough forces to hold out, but he said it is written in military law that one sector has to take the suffering so that offensives can be planned in other sectors. His sector was the one picked for the suffering. And it really suffered.

The story of how his troops fought seems to make it clear that the strength of the Red Army lies in training, discipline, the fighting heart of its soldiers and a ruthless organization of the country's wealth and civilian strength in support of the army.

I saw three of the five objectives that the Germans fought for, the Red October Factory, the Mamai Kurgan and the business center. For most of the sixty-six days the Germans held all three.

But they never got the river bluff beyond these objectives.

The Red October Factory after the battle was a mess. All the workers' houses to the west of the plant had been leveled to the ground. There was only rubble about, bits of smashed brick, and as far as you could see the only objects that met the eye were hundreds of iron bedsteads, which seemed to be the only articles of furniture that flame and shellfire would not destroy. The machine shops, smelters, powerhouses and warehouses had been burned out or leveled to the ground. The area

was pitted with shellholes. Strewn about were the bodies of men. The Germans had passed by the workers' homes, hacked a way into the factory buildings and dug themselves in before the last brick building. In this last building the Russians had fought and died. A hundred yards behind them was the bluff, and below the bluff was the river. This is where General Guriev's division had held, on a half-mile front.

Just to Guriev's left, that is just south of the factory, was a deep ravine of about a hundred yards wide, called by the Russians "bathhouse ravine." It led down to the river bank, cutting its way through the bluff, and I was told that thousands of men died in the fights to control it.

Further south from the ravine was the Mamai Kurgan, called on military maps "Hill 102," because its ridges rise 102 meters above the river. This was the height that the Germans first captured on September 14, the height Rodimtsev's guards division recaptured on September 16, the one the Germans got back a week later.

The Germans never really got it all back. They came back after having been driven off by Rodimtsev and took the main ridge after Rodimtsev's division had been replaced by Batiuk's division. Batiuk, however, clung to the eastern slopes but it was not until many weeks had passed that he was able to drive the enemy from the two water towers on the main ridge.

The third military objective I saw was the business district of Stalingrad. The Germans controlled it but not the last hundred yards that lay before the river bank. When I saw this area it was in ruins. Every house

and every building had been leveled or burned out. Here and there you could see a five-story brick wall still standing, but there was nothing behind it, the roof and floors having given way and crashed in a mass of rubble to the ground. This was where the German 6th Army made one of its last stands after the Russian counter-offensive. It was in this district that von Paulus himself was captured.

I never did get up to the Barricades or the tractor factories but I was told the wreckage there resembled the ruins at the Red October plant. The Barricades plant was held by Ludnikov's division, which the Germans drove to within eighty yards of the river. And it was here that the Germans broke through to the river in two places, just north of and just south of the factory. For forty-five days Ludnikov was cut off from the rest of the 62d Army. He started with 10,000 men. He ended up with 800.

The fifth great objective in Stalingrad was the tractor factory built with the help of American engineers which after 1930 turned out a large part of the many tractors that were sent to Russia's collective farms. It was held by several Russian divisions, one commanded by Zholudev, another by Gurtiev and for a time Rodimtsev's men were stationed in the machine shops. Most of it was in German hands towards the end of the siege.

In their drive for these five objectives along the twenty-mile front, the Germans reached the river at only two places, to the north and south of the Barricades factory for a total distance of about four miles. The remaining sixteen miles of the Volga shore were never surrendered by the 62d Army.

General Chuikov told me that the worst days for the Stalingrad defenders were October 14 and November 11.

The Russian commander knew in advance of a German planned offensive towards the tractor factory on October 14 so in order to ruin this timetable he ordered a Russian offensive in the same area on October 9. It was bitter warfare for four long days and nights, with both sides fighting for possession of a strip of land one hundred yards wide. By the night of October 12 neither side controlled it. Nevertheless, on October 14 the Germans did attack in the same direction, sending five infantry divisions and two tank divisions to battle on a three-mile front.

Von Paulus began with a four-hour artillery barrage coupled with heavy bombings in which some 2,500 plane flights were recorded. He was aiming directly for the tractor factory, and Chuikov's headquarters was in the bluff alongside of the plant. That was the day when the water glasses shattered on his table and the day when sixty-one officers and men of his staff died. That day the Germans fought their way into the factory buildings. There was a battle for every room, for every floor, down in the cellar, for every lathe and storeroom. By nightfall the enemy had advanced one mile and though the Russians knew they could not keep up the defense much longer the enemy had suffered so much for that one mile that the following day there was no gain and after that the situation was fairly stabilized up and down the line.

In the first days of November, however, Zhukov ordered Eremenko to tell General Chuikov that the time

had come for Chuikov's army to activize the defense, and for the next three or four days the Russians in the city attacked the Germans, the idea being to force the German high command to bring up more divisions to support the 6th Army. Zhukov wanted more enemy divisions in the trap he was preparing. Chuikov says that von Paulus did in fact get two infantry divisions from the deep rear.

But on November 11 the Germans made their last great bid for control of the city, and on this day they attacked close to the Mamai Kurgan. It was a critical day for the Russian command, for on that day ice began to flow in the river, complicating the system of supply.

For some hours it looked as if the Russians might run short of munitions. They never were able to keep more than a two-and-a-half-day supply on the Stalingrad side of the Volga. In the early hours of the ice, they wondered whether they would be able to keep that much on hand. But the German attack did not last long. It was one mighty attempt that ended with a net gain of twenty yards for the enemy. After that the 62d Army had nothing to do but hold tight until Zhukov's counter-offensive was launched. They had to wait only eight days.

A story told of one of the critical battles in which General Gurtiev's division participated gives some idea of the sort of fighting that went on inside Stalingrad itself. This was a division of Siberians from Omsk, Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk and Barnaul, civilians in peacetime who had been mobilized soon after the war. They were described as tough, but soft-spoken men, accustomed to hardships as most Siberians are. Their

commander was fifty years old, who had fought in the Czarist army from 1914 to 1917 and after that had been part of the Red Army. His division joined the 62d Army in early October. Its three regiments, under Colonels Mankelov, Mikhailov and Chamov, had traveled 125 miles in two days, crossed the Volga and barely had time in which to fortify themselves before the Germans attacked.

So desperate was the situation on the day Gurtiev took up his position that he left his divisional artillery on the far side of the Volga. Two regiments he put in the line just before a small factory. The third guarded a near-by ravine that led down to the river, a ravine which came to be known as the "ravine of death." On the first day the Siberians endured eight hours of steady dive bombing. That night they buried their dead while the guns, howitzers and mortars were still firing. On the second day forty bombers came over early. Malenkov's regiment attacked before noon, gaining a little distance. The Germans counter-attacked that night. On the third day German bombers were overhead for twelve consecutive hours; then the enemy infantry attacked.

"Vnimanie!" a Russian observer would cry out over a microphone attached to a loudspeaker system. "Look out. Sub-machine-gunners are filtering in on the left."

Then from across the river the Russian artillery would open fire, having been notified by radio with no attempt being made to use cipher. The gunfire would raise a curtain of steel and explosions before Gurtiev's division. The Germans would not get through. Day after day this went on, with frequent fights in the front line for possession of a shellhole or a small building that

had not been destroyed. Soon the cheeks of the Siberians grew hollow. The tension was terrific. The noise was endless. And the men had little desire to eat the food brought to them.

According to the story told by the Russian writer, Vasili Grossman, it was on the twenty-first day that the Germans decided to try for a breakthrough to the Volga. For eighty hours they bombed and shelled. Then, a few minutes of awful silence, followed by the roar of tanks, the scream of men, the rattle of machine-gun fire and bursting grenades. Gurtiev fought back with artillery, grenades, flame-throwers and mortars and the fire of thousands of sub-machine guns. He had no tanks, for the Russians believed that tanks were useless in street-fighting. In fact, General Chuikov told me that in his entire army there were only forty tanks, nine mediums and thirty-one lights, and they were dug into the ground and used as pillboxes. Gurtiev too used few rifles for the Russians found that in street-fighting a sub-machine gun or automatic rifle is far superior to the standard rifle.

On that day the Germans smashed into the first defense line and cut the communications between divisional and regimental command posts and the troops. They got into the factory workshops. Chamov's regiment beat off ten attacks, and he himself was said to be firing a mortar towards the close of the day. It was useless to try to direct the battle. It was every man for himself. Mikhailov's headquarters was hit by a bomb and he was killed. Major Kushnarev took command and moved the headquarters into a conduit that ran beneath the workshops. German gunners got to one en-

trance of the conduit and for some time Kushnarev and his staff stood there with grenades, beating them off.

For several days the offensive continued. It was a fight for every step on every staircase, for every corner of every corridor. Many times the factory changed hands until finally the Germans withdrew exhausted. Gurtiev, the divisional commander, later estimated that within a thirty-day period his division was attacked 117 times, that on one day there were twenty-three separate attacks, and that there were only three days when German planes were not overhead ten to twelve hours a day. Many times cases were reported when both Russians and Germans would jump into the same shellhole to escape falling bombs. It is said that there was not a song or a laugh heard throughout the division during its stay in the factory district. There was too much suffering, but it was suffering such as those Siberians endured that made possible the great counter-offensive of November 19.

CHAPTER 18

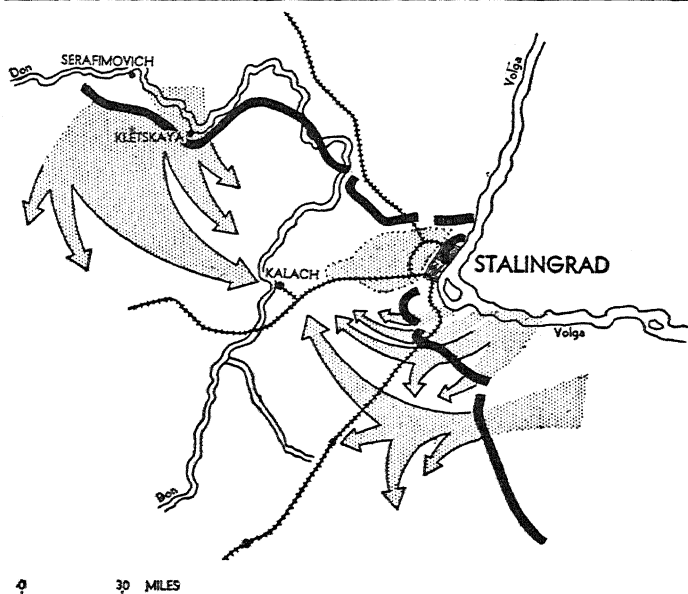
The Battle for Stalingrad—III

WHEN General Zhukov, as representative of supreme general headquarters, launched his counter-offensive on November 19, this was the situation:

The Germans held a narrow strip along the Volga just north of Stalingrad and another just south of the city. They also controlled the river bank at two places in the northern part of the city, on both sides of the Barricades factory, that totaled about four miles. The Russian 2d Army controlled the remaining sixteen miles of river bank inside the city.

North of Stalingrad the Russian line ran northwest from the Volga towards Kletskaya and Serafimovich. South of the city the Russian line ran due south into the Kalmuk steppes.

For weeks the Soviet high command had been making its plans. It had strengthened its forces north and south of Stalingrad. It had organized its tank brigades into larger and more powerful tank corps. It brought up aviation. Early in November it improved its positions on the northwest so that the jumping-off points were south of the River Don. About the middle of the month it quickly built bridges across the Volga south of the city and while the ice was still flowing down to the Caspian Sea it concentrated strong armies on the southern flank and on the west side of the river. Then



THE BATTLE FOR STALINGRAD

Heavy black lines show Russian positions before counter-offensive. Arrows show directions of Russian attack. Shaded area shows Germans in encirclement on November 30.

Zhukov gave the order for the plans to be put into operation. The counter-offensive began with a short period of artillery preparation.

The troops northwest of Stalingrad began to pour through breaks in the German lines. Here the Russian mobile forces included three tank corps and two cavalry corps. While the infantry surrounded an enemy force a few miles south of Serafimovich, the 1st Guards Tank Corps, commanded by Major General Alexei G. Rodin, headed southeast across the Don bend and in a sixty-two mile dash captured the town of Kalach, which

is forty miles due west of Stalingrad and at that was directly in the rear of the German 6th Army. About the same time another Russian armored column, headed by the 5th Guards Tank Corps, started south of Kletskaya and raced for the village of Marinovka, about midway between Kalach and Stalingrad. These two drives crippled the German left flank.

Also on November 19 the Russian force south of Stalingrad, headed by two mechanized corps and one cavalry corps, started moving up towards Kalach and Marinovka to join forces with the armored columns coming down from the northwest. On the afternoon of November 22, the 3d Guards Mechanized Corps joined the 5th Guards Tank Corps at Marinovka, completing the first circle around von Paulus's 6th Army. Similarly, another Russian column from the south passed north of Abganerovo and came out on the Karpovka River, only a few miles from Kalach which now was occupied by the 1st Tank Corps. So the second iron ring was forged around the 6th Army.

About ten weeks later, after this 6th Army was destroyed, I talked to many of the captured German generals. Most of them agreed that if they had tried to break out of encirclement in the early days they might have made it.

Within a few days, however, it was too late. Instead of trying to break out, von Paulus began to gather in his crippled divisions. He pulled them to the east bank of the Don northwest of Stalingrad and he pulled them in from the south. Now Soviet infantry divisions were following in the wake of the tank forces, tightening the ring around the trapped army, while other divisions

were fanning out to prevent German reserves from coming to its relief. Every day the distance between the surrounded army and the rest of the German army was widened until soon it became apparent the 6th Army could not escape even if it wanted to.

If the German High Command made a major mistake in not pulling von Paulus out sooner than it did, it made an even greater mistake in the next few weeks. It decided to feed von Paulus by transport plane and to send an army to his relief, an army that would fight its way through the Russian ring. To attain this objective it put a relief army under the command of General Field Marshal Fritz von Manstein, concentrated it at Kotelnikovo 110 miles southwest of Stalingrad and on December 12 started it out to try to penetrate the sixty-two miles of Russian controlled territory. It was a move that had been foreseen by the Russian high command. Waiting for von Manstein, the German who had won victory at Sevastopol, was the tough army commanded by Lieutenant General Malinovsky, the soldier who had served as a corporal in France in the last war. For four days Malinovsky fell back slowly before von Manstein.

Von Manstein commanded two tank divisions, four infantry divisions and two cavalry divisions. I do not know what Malinovsky had, but his forces included an armored unit formed by the 3d Guard Tank Corps and the 5th Guards Mechanized Corps. From December 12 to December 16 Malinovsky pulled back before the fury of von Manstein's attack. The Germans battled along for twelve of the sixty-two miles they had to go. Then Malinovsky held fast. Finally, on December 24 Mali-

novsky counter-attacked, and on the 29th his 3d Guards Tank Corps, commanded by Major General Pavel Rotmistrov, last heard of in the Battle for Moscow, captured Kotelnikovo, the city from which von Manstein had started. With its loss the German command must have realized that the attempt to break through to the surrounded 6th Army was hopeless. But it made one more try, this time from the region of Tormosin, some miles northwest of Kotelnikovo, and yet before this force could get going Malinovsky had attacked it and driven it from the field.

Meanwhile, Zhukov had enlarged the scope of his offensive. From far northwest of Stalingrad he launched offensives with the troops of Colonel General Nikolai Vatutin, commander of the Southwest Front, and Colonel General Filip Golikov, commander of the Voronezh Front. Vatutin struck southwest from the area near Serafimovich and cut the railway that runs due west from Stalingrad in the direction of Kharkov. Golikov headed due west and cut the Voronezh-Rostov railway, first at Kantemirovka.

It was about this time that I visited Kotelnikovo, some days after it had been recaptured, and in traveling through the countryside I found that though the month was January there was little snow on the ground and the temperature was not very cold. We left Moscow one afternoon by train and traveled to Saratov on the Volga above Stalingrad. There at the railroad men's club we were served one of the finest breakfasts I have ever had in my life. Incidentally, the food that was served to us on front trips was one of the astonishing sidelights of our life in Russia. Often it was so good that

it was embarrassing because we knew that no Russian, except on a special occasion when he was being entertained by the government, received such food. I remember the day we walked into that Saratov restaurant. In the main hall Russians were eating, not badly, better in fact than the people of Moscow whose supplies were limited by the amount of transport available. But we passed through into a smaller room that was piled high with food that would have done credit to Cesar of the Ritz. We started with cold hors d'oeuvres — cold sausage, cheese, butter, smoked salmon, white and black bread, caviar, pickles, honey, beer and vodka. Then came one of the finest hot soups ever served, and Russia is famous for its soups. After the soup came the main course of hot, well-cooked french-fried potatoes and one of the best prepared wiener schnitzels I have ever had. The price was twenty dollars a person.

Afterwards we all remarked that the Soviet officials accompanying us took this excellent meal as a matter of course, but it made the correspondents extremely uncomfortable to think that they had been singled out for special attention simply because they were foreigners at a time when many, many Russians, even in Saratov were getting along on little more than bread and thin soups.

From Saratov our train crossed to the far bank of the Volga and then turned south passing about sixty-five miles east of Stalingrad. This stretch of railroad had been heavily bombed by the enemy. Most of its stations had been leveled to the ground and occasionally we passed places where entire trains had been blasted from the tracks. As we neared Stalingrad we began to hope

we would be allowed to visit the city near which the surrounded German Army was being ground to pieces. But there was not a chance. The Russians do not like to have observers around when their troops are in action, so after leaving the train we climbed into an old ambulance, crossed the Volga over a pontoon bridge after dark and drove towards Kotelnikovo southwest of Stalingrad. The ambulance turned out to be a useful vehicle. It was large enough to seat all of us. It did not consume as much gas as three or four automobiles would have used. And for our comfort the Russians had assigned to the ambulance a soldier whose job it was to keep a wood fire burning in the vehicle's little metal stove.

As we drove across the Kalmuk steppes we passed some of the great battlefields south of Stalingrad. There was almost no snow on the ground. As far as you could see there was brown steppe grass showing through the white. Then we would pass an area where a tank battle had taken place and you could almost reconstruct the scene by the position of the damaged machines. Forty or fifty Russian tanks would be scattered about, all pointing towards the west, the direction in which they were headed when stopped by anti-tank shells or bombs. Then thirty or forty yards beyond them would be fifty or sixty German machines, pointing to the east, rusty, burned out and useless. Here and there were smashed anti-tank guns, hundreds of empty shell cases, with the bodies of their crews spread around for seventy-five feet. It was over this area that the Russian forces south of Stalingrad had moved in the early days of the November 19 counter-offensive.

After a long drive we came into Kotelnikovo which we found had not been damaged much by the fighting. The main buildings were gone and brick was scattered about but the homes for the most part were untouched, and the Russians had the railroad running again. The next day we talked with Russian generals and German prisoners. The generals reported that the German High Command was beginning to show signs of bewilderment, that it was switching its divisions from one sector to another in a feverish attempt to stop the offensive.

"What about the 6th Army surrounded at Stalingrad?" we asked.

"It's an armed camp of prisoners," said General Malinovsky whose troops had taken Kotelnikovo.

"They can dig graves for themselves and prepare crosses — or surrender," said a staff officer, Major General Peter Kotelkov.

At this time — it was early in January — two great battles were being fought. In one of them the bulk of the Russian forces was chasing the German reserves back to and beyond the Kharkov-Kursk line from which von Bock had launched his great offensive six months before. In the other battle the Russians were engaged in the extermination of the surrounded 6th Army. To wage these two battles Supreme General Headquarters in Moscow reorganized its line.

Colonel General Eremenko's Stalingrad Front was abolished as an organization, and General Chuikov's 62d Army in Stalingrad was assigned to the newly formed Don Front which was commanded by Colonel General Rokossovsky. The remaining armies of the Stalingrad Front were assigned to the newly-organized

South Front under General Malinovsky and the South Front joined the pursuit of the Germans to the west.

The Don Front, however, had the job of liquidating the trapped German army. To this front as representative of the supreme general headquarters was sent Colonel General Nikolai Voronov, commander of all Red Army artillery. Zhukov was sent to Moscow to coordinate the forces that would raise the siege of Leningrad by breaking through the blockade east of the city.

General Rokossovsky's Don Front consisted of six separate armies. One of them was Chuikov's 62d. The others were the 21st under General Chistiakov, the 57th, the 64th under Lieutenant General Mikhail Shumilov, the 65th and the 66th. They probably numbered something more than a half million men. The German 6th Army opposing them consisted of about 200,000 fighting men and another 110,000 or more non-combat troops.

At the end of the first week in January the Russians were ready to destroy General von Paulus's 6th Army, and so on January 8 two officers accompanied by a bugler approached the German outposts carrying a white flag. They had with them an ultimatum signed by Voronov and Rokossovsky. The Russians say their emissaries were met with rifle fire. The Germans deny any knowledge of the incident but in any event they had no intention of accepting the terms for von Paulus had received orders from Hitler to fight on. At that late date Hitler knew his trapped army was doomed, but as long as it held out the rest of his forces had a chance of escaping to the west. He sacrificed this army to save the bulk of his troops, to gain precious time.

When the Russian officers returned saying they had been fired upon, Voronov and Rokossovsky sent them back a second time after first ordering their planes to drop leaflets on the German lines, containing the terms of the ultimatum. But again they came back empty handed, and so on January 10 the Russians launched an offensive.

The Soviet terms of surrender have been published before but I think they are worth repeating as an important part of the record of the battle:

To Colonel General PAULUS, commander of the German 6th Army, or his assistant, and to all the officers and men of the German forces surrounded at STALINGRAD:

THE GERMAN 6TH ARMY, formations of the 4th Tank Army and units sent to them as reinforcements have been completely surrounded since November 23, 1942.

The Red Army forces have surrounded this grouping of German troops in a solid ring. All hopes that your troops might be saved by a German offensive from the south and southwest have collapsed; the German troops rushed to your assistance have been routed by the Red Army and their remnants are now retreating towards Rostov.

Owing to the successful, swift advance of the Red Army, the German air transport force which kept you supplied with starvation rations of food, ammunition and fuel is being compelled to shift its bases frequently and to fly long distances to reach you. Moreover, the German air transport force is suffering tremendous losses in planes and crews at the hands of the Russian

air force. Its help to the surrounded forces is becoming ineffective.

Your surrounded troops are in a grave position. They are suffering from hunger, disease and cold. The severe Russian winter is only beginning. The hard frosts, cold winds and blizzards are still to come, and your soldiers are not protected by warm uniforms and live in extremely unhygienic conditions.

You as the commander, and all the officers of the surrounded troops, must fully realize that you have no possibility of breaking through the ring that surrounds you. Your position is hopeless and further resistance is useless.

In view of the hopeless position in which you are placed, and in order to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, we offer you the following terms of capitulation:

All the surrounded German forces under the command of yourself and your staff are to cease hostilities.

All the troops, arms, equipment and war supplies are to be turned over to us by you in an organized manner and in good condition.

We guarantee life and safety to all officers and soldiers who cease hostilities and upon termination of the war their return to Germany or to any country to which the prisoners of war may choose to go.

All troops who surrender will retain their uniforms, insignia and orders, personal belongings, valuables and in the case of higher officers their side-arms.

All officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers who surrender will be provided normal food.

All wounded, sick and those suffering from frostbite will be given medical treatment.

Your reply is expected by 10 a.m. Moscow time on January 9, 1943 in written form, to be delivered by your personal representative who is to travel by passenger car, flying a white flag, along the road from Konny siding to the station of Kotluban. Your representative will be met by authorized Russian commanders in the district of B, one-half kilometer southeast of siding 564 at 10 a.m. on January 9, 1943.

In the event that you reject our proposal for capitulation, we warn you that the Red Army troops and the Red Air Force will be compelled to take steps to wipe out the surrounded German troops and that you will be responsible for their annihilation.

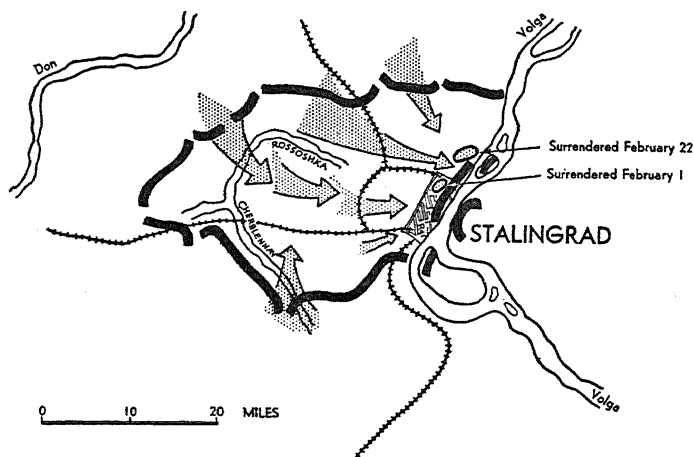
Colonel General of Artillery VORONOV,
representative of the general head-
quarters of the supreme command
of the Red Army.

Lieutenant General ROKOSHOVSKY,
commander of troops of the
Don Front.

To observers the proposal seemed a reasonable document, first because it was an accurate description of the position of the German forces and second because there was little doubt that General Rokossovsky's armies could carry out their threat. The Germans were living on three and a half to five ounces of bread a day. That is anything from a slice and a half to two and a half slices a day. The weather was beginning to grow cold. German medical supplies were running out. Certainly the German air transport fleet had suffered heavily. While I was in Kotelnikovo I talked to several German air-

men who had been shot down over the town. They were all on their way to bring supplies to the surrounded army when they were captured. In the early days of the encirclement between 400 and 500 planes were flown in every day with gasoline, food, medicines, ammunition and other equipment. In early December they were fiercely attacked and fifty or sixty a day were destroyed in the air. They lost their airfields near Kotelnikovo and other near-by towns. They lost a large field at Tatsinskaya and another at Zimovniki. By early January they were lucky to keep from a hundred to one hundred and fifty planes in service a day, and many of them were being lost. The prisoners I talked to were German airmen who had been rushed from Germany to a temporary field that had been organized at Salsk, a hundred miles southwest of Kotelnikovo and about two hundred miles from Stalingrad. They said they were forced to fly without fighter escort and their Junkers-52 transport planes were armed only with two machine guns in the nose and one light machine gun in the turret. They were trying to go by day as well as by night, so critical was the position of the trapped German forces, and they were being advised to drop their supplies over the German lines because the encircled army had only one airfield left — at Pitomnik — and that was under Russian artillery fire.

If there was any peculiar sentence in the Russian ultimatum it was the promise that the Germans if they surrendered could go to "any country to which the prisoners of war may choose to go," at the end of the war. Obviously, the "other countries" would have something to say about that. Anyway, nothing came of the ulti-



THE BATTLE FOR STALINGRAD

Heavy black lines show positions of Rokossovsky's forces on January 10 before offensive that destroyed German Sixth Army.

matum and so on the morning of January 10 the Russians opened fire. On that day the encircled army occupied an area that extended from Stalingrad thirty-five miles to the west. At its widest point it ran twenty-five miles from north to south.

Rokossovsky struck first from the west, keeping his forces to the north of the railroad that runs west from Stalingrad. He cracked this part of the German line and by the night of January 13 he had driven the trapped divisions in towards Stalingrad so that their backs were to the Rossoshka and Cherblennaya Rivers. What an astonishing position this was for now Germans were backing into Stalingrad and the Russians were coming from the west. In the previous August the Russians had

held this same position, but then they were backing into Stalingrad and the Germans were coming from the west. On January 14 Rokossovsky struck up from the south and broke the Cherblennaya line and at the same time he came from the northwest to break the Rossoshka line. Then both columns joined to push the Germans further towards Stalingrad so that on January 17 the Germans were back to the Peschanka-Bolshaya Rossoshka line.

Then Rokossovsky hit again, this time from the northwest and crippled the Bolshaya Rossoshka part of the German defenses with the result that by January 24 the Germans had been folded back almost into the outskirts of Stalingrad itself. On this day the line corresponded roughly to a semi-circle about six miles from the city. But the Russians did not stop. They kept going day and night, taking advantage of German confusion, German suffering and German lack of ammunition. On January 26 a Russian attack broke the German defending army into two groups. One group was surrounded in the southern part of Stalingrad and the other in the northern part of the city.

On January 27 General Chuikov's 62d Army inside Stalingrad joined Rokossovsky's other armies in the final destruction of the surrounded groups. On February 1 the southern German group surrendered together with the 6th Army's commander, von Paulus, who only a few days before had been promoted to the rank of General Field Marshal. That night Russian planes dropped leaflets on which were pinned pictures showing von Paulus being questioned at Russian headquarters. The following morning the northern group surrendered

and the Battle of Stalingrad was over. This is when the correspondents in Moscow left by plane to see the ruins of the city and to talk with Russian and German generals in an effort to find out what had been happening in the previous weeks. They found a grim story of hunger, cold and lack of ammunition.

CHAPTER 19

The Battle for Stalingrad—IV

ONE of the most fascinating afternoons that the correspondents passed in the Soviet Union was that day when they saw General Field Marshal von Paulus and the captured German generals and colonels in the lonely-looking peasant houses some miles west of Stalingrad. Two days before the shellfire had stopped and for the first time in more than five months there was peace in the countryside. But the dead had not been buried. The wounded still were being care for. The majority of the prisoners were being marched to the east where they would board railroad boxcars for the long, hopeless journey to Siberia and its concentration camps. In Stalingrad itself we saw the dead. Once in a while we saw a few wounded Germans whom the Red Army had not had time to evacuate. In one Stalingrad cellar lay three hundred German wounded who were too weak to be moved. But to the west of the city, in the little peasant homes, were the Nazi commanders, the men who had led the divisions into battle and into destruction. We saw twenty-three of them.

In appearance they were far different from the generals we had seen in the Red Army. Their average age was about fifty-five, ten or twelve years older than the average Russian commander. They looked taller,

heavier set, more dissipated. To me they looked as if all their lives they had lived hard, fought hard, drunk hard and played hard.

Little Paul Holt, of the London Daily Express, described them ably. In Hollywood, he said, Eric von Stroheim for years had caricatured the German generals of the last war. These officers seemed to be caricaturing Eric von Stroheim. Here were the fake monocles, the fake sabre cuts, the rudeness that the Nazis confused with dignity. They were out-von-stroheiming von Stroheim, Holt said, and he was right. But it seemed to all of us that their similarity ended with appearance. You could not say they were all tough and still ready to fight. They were not. You could not say they were all ardent Nazis. They were not. Some were tough and some were broken. Some were calm and some were nervous. Some believed the day would come when they would be rescued by a victorious German army. Others knew they were finished until the end of the war.

The first officer I saw was General Field Marshal von Paulus, six feet four inches tall, a thin mouth that dropped at the corners, a nervous affliction that twitched his right eye, part of his right cheek and the right side of his nose. He was wearing a hat of gray rabbit fur and a long gray overcoat, without medals or decorations of any kind except the epaulets of a colonel general. The only curious thing about his coat was that it had a strip of green leather running from the shoulder down to the waist. He came out of the peasant's hut when we asked to see him, but he would not talk. He just stood there in the snow, head up, shoulders back,

and the only words he said were his first name, "Friedrich," and his age, "fifty-two."

Standing across from him were General Bielefeld Schmidt, his chief of staff, a short, stocky man with a wooden face, and von Paulus's adjutant, Colonel Adam, with a big, boyish face partly covered by the ear-flaps of his leopard skin winter hat. Von Paulus was wearing valenkis or felt boots and the others had on the usual army leather boots, not warm enough for Russia in early February.

After failing to get these men to talk, we moved to another hut. It had three rooms. The first was occupied by three Russian sub-machine-gunners. In the room to the left were Lieutenant General Helmuth Schlemmer, commander of the 14th Tank Corps, who got up and put on his coat when we entered; Lieutenant General Otto Rinoldi, chief of sanitary services of the 6th Army; Lieutenant General Dubois, commander of the 44th Infantry Division; and Lieutenant General Adler von Daniels, commander of the 376th Infantry Division. Schlemmer was wearing at his throat the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross which he got during the Battle for Stalingrad and another medal showing a German helmet surrounded by a silver ring which he received for having been wounded five times. He had fought in Poland and France. Rinoldi was a mild mannered man, wearing glasses, and like Schlemmer, gray-haired. Dubois was unshaven and told us proudly that his division was Austrian, not German. Besides the Iron Cross he wore a new medal showing a swastika surrounded by a gold ring, awarded to field commanders who had

fought in Russia during the Battle for Moscow the year before. Von Daniels wore a leather jacket. When he saw the Russian conducting officer wearing the epaulets recently adopted by the Red Army he pointed to them and said, "Ach, neue."

None of these men would talk much. They all said: "We had to fight. We had the orders of the High Command."

In the next room were four other officers. One was tall, gray-haired Major General Moritz von Drebber, commander of the 297th Infantry Division.

"What do you think of the Red Army?" he was asked.

"It has fought well," he replied.

"What happened to the 6th Army?"

He gestured with his right hand. "The Russians came in from the north. The Russians came in from the south. We were in the middle. We were cut off. We had no ammunition, no food. We lost our last airdrome."

"Did Hitler order you to keep on fighting?"

"No. But we had orders from von Paulus to stop fighting when we were forced to abandon certain lines of resistance."

"Could the encircled army have fought its way out if it had received the order in time?"

"We could have fought our way out but we never received the order."

"Why?"

"That can only be answered by von Paulus."

In another house near by there was a roomful of generals. One of them was Major General Raske, commander of the southern of the last two surrounded groups. He was a tall, gray-haired man with a soft voice.

His hair was brushed straight back with a slight part on the left. We asked him about the food he was getting because General Schlemmer whom we had seen before had complained it was neither good nor sufficient.

Raske said he could not complain and the other generals agreed with him. One of the others was a loud-mouthed officer named Sixt von Arnim, a lieutenant general, commander of the 113th Infantry Division, whose first cousin a few months later was to be captured in Tunisia. This von Arnim was a thin man of slight build, with a long hooked nose that was bent to the right as if it had been smashed back. The back of his head was shaved and on his chest was an array of medals.

"What did you get the medals for?" he was asked.

He shrugged his shoulders and gave a mirthless laugh in which he was joined by a Colonel Ludwig, commander of the 14th Tank Division. This Ludwig was a hard-looking fellow of medium height, wearing a monocle. His face was gashed with sabre strokes, put on, it may be guessed from their design, according to plan.

We asked General Raske what it was that caused the defeat of his army and why, after first refusing to accept the terms of surrender, the Germans had capitulated. Raske stood up from the table at which he had been sitting and stared out of the window to the snow-covered steppe country beyond. Then General von Arnim of the twisted nose broke in. He was leaning against the table with his arms folded across his chest.

"The question is badly put," he said irritably. "You should have asked how did we manage to hold out so long."

But Raske intended to answer his question in his own way. He hesitated for a few seconds and then said in a low, thoughtful voice: "Hunger, cold and lack of ammunition."

I believe he spoke the truth, but only part of the truth. For there were more important factors involved in the defeat of this German 6th Army. Some of them are: the brilliant manner in which Timoshenko retreated in the early weeks of the German offensive, conserving his men and material for future battles; the long line of German communications, supply lines that included only two railroads, the passionate courage of the Russians who refused to yield all of Stalingrad, Russian superiority in artillery, months of hard training for battle before the Russians divisions went into the line, the diversion to the defense of Stalingrad of so large a part of the country's wealth and civilian strength, able leadership. It is perhaps too early to estimate the importance to the Russian counter-offensive of the American-British landings in North Africa that began in early November while the Russians were planning their attack.

CHAPTER 20

Allied Aid

I^N the many long months before the United States and Great Britain were able even to think of seizing the initiative in Western Europe, both countries did what they could to strengthen the Red Army on the eastern front by supplying it with vast quantities of tanks, airplanes, trucks, explosives, clothing, medical supplies and about everything else they could spare. Every three weeks or so large convoys of American and British ships arrived in the Arctic ports of Murmansk or Archangel. They moved through waters controlled by German torpedo bombers, in winter when the days were short and in summer when the days were long. Sometimes they suffered terrible losses. Sometimes they got through intact. At the same time another great route of supplies was opened through the Persian Gulf and Iran. Docks were built. Roads were improved. Railroad engines and freight cars were shipped in to move munitions. As the months went by still a third route to Russia was opened through Alaska and the Far East.

It was just three months after the start of the German invasion that the first Allied convoys were on their way to the Arctic ports. They were not large and the ships holds were filled with hastily-assembled equipment that included British Hurricane fighters, British

light and medium tanks, Bren gun carriers, shoes, food, ammunition, anything that the British could get together.

I went to Russia on the third convoy to sail from Scotland. We left on the night of October 13 at a time when the German Army was only sixty-five miles from Moscow and moving so fast we did not know whether our ships would get to Russia on time. We numbered only seven ships, protected by one cruiser, three destroyers and three mine-laying sloops, and no German submarine challenged us and not once did a German bomber circle overhead. They were astonishing days. I remember the afternoon we pulled into Archangel. The British sailors on board crowded the deck and as we came alongside the pier we saw hundreds of Russian workmen waiting to unlash the planes from our decks and to hoist the tanks from our holds.

"Let's give them a cheer," shouted one of our Scotsmen and after the men had cheered they stared in amazement at the blank, disinterested faces of the Russians on the dock. There was perhaps a half minute of awful silence, and then the mouth of the Scotsman hardened and he screamed out: "All right. Go to hell, then." And he turned his back and went below, followed by the rest of the crew. A few hours later we found out why the Russians had failed to acknowledge the cheer. They were prison laborers, far from their homes, guarded by police with rifles and fixed bayonets. I suppose they did not care whether any country sent supplies to Russia. It just meant more work to them.

During that first winter the size of the convoys was increased, and ships began to arrive in Murmansk and

Archangel direct from American ports. But by now the Germans were building air fields in northern Finland and Norway and when the spring came and convoys of thirty or forty ships were pulling in, the bombers began to take off. During those months of 1942 our ships that sailed to Russia were inadequately armed, perhaps six, seven or eight light machine guns to a ship, and often they carried limited supplies of ammunition. When we sent them our governments knew they did not have the firepower they needed to ward off attack, but they also knew how much the supplies were needed by the Red Army. We began to lose ship after ship. On one convoy of thirty-five ships we lost twenty-eight. There did not seem to be any way our transports could sneak through, and once they docked at Murmansk or Archangel they were subjected to merciless bombing that leveled Murmansk, destroyed the docks and sunk our ships at the wharves or in the roadstead.

I think it is true that despite the losses of shipping, the escort vessels were able to rescue most of the sailors thrown into the cold seas. But those men suffered. Emergency hospitals were opened and amputations were performed at times without medicines to dull the pain.

During the summer, however, our ships began to sail with heavier escorts and now they sailed with heavier guns and plenty of ammunition. By October, one year after the first ships had gone to Russia, the Allies had sent nineteen convoys by the northern route, and the nineteenth was protected by a fleet of seventy-seven warships.

By November the long nights were beginning again

and towards the end of the year our ships were getting through all right. The only trouble was they were being bombed in port. Then the British, who were responsible for the protection of the ships, more than sixty per cent of which were American, asked the Russians to increase the fighter protection of Murmansk. Archangel once again was frozen over. All transports had to put into Murmansk and the Germans bombed it daily. The Russians promised additional protection. A few squadrons arrived, stayed for a short time and left. The British asked for protection a second time. The Russians promised. Still it did not arrive. Then the British asked for the right to send their own fighter planes to protect Murmansk. They said they could not stand the loss of so many transports and the port must be guarded. The Russians answered a half-yes and the British sent ground crews to Russia on the next convoy, but when they arrived the Russians would not let them off. This led to real disagreement and the result was in April of 1943 no convoys were moving by the northern route, and the story was that none would move until the question of protection had been settled.

It was not an incident that astonished American and British observers in Moscow, for during all the months of aid to Russia the Russians consistently refused to allow us to operate on Russian soil. Their stand appeared inexplicable at first, but most of us came to the conclusion that it was simply a manifestation of the years of distrust that followed the revolution. The Russians would win their own war in their own way.

This feeling, which the Allies did their best to change, continued throughout the time I was in Russia, and its

existence lead to countless misunderstandings, arguments and difficulties. We were sending planes to Russia, but the Russians insisted that their pilots fly them into the country. The result was confusion at times that actually delayed deliveries. American pilots would fly planes to Alaska, and there they had to turn them over to Russian pilots who would take them to Siberia. Our ships and our pilots took planes to Iran. From there they had to be turned over to the Russians. The British wanted to fly planes direct to Russia from England, but the Russians insisted that their pilots do the job. The three countries were allies in the battle against Nazi Germany and yet Moscow wanted no American or British pilots flying over Russian territory.

The same feeling of distrust was manifested in other ways. We offered time and again to send our pilots and mechanics to Russia to show the Russians how to use our planes for all planes have their peculiarities that must be understood. But the Russians said no. They knew all about them. One result was that, in the early months they used our Aircobras and B-25 medium bombers, many were damaged through inexperienced handling. Both planes have a nose wheel which has led to their being called planes with a tricycle landing gear. In fact, they should be landed on two wheels, then nosed over on to the front wheel as the pilot taxis across the field. The Russians, however, tried to land them on three wheels and the relatively weak forward wheel frequently broke.

The same lack of cooperation was apparent in all our relations with Moscow at that time. Our doctors, stationed in Moscow, were never allowed to visit the Red

Army field hospitals although our countries were supplying the army with large quantities of medical supplies. It was a rare occasion when one of them had an opportunity to discuss medicine with a Russian doctor, and yet we felt that there were many things the Red Army knew about the care of wounded that might have been useful to our own armies. In the spring of 1943 the United States sent to Europe, Africa and Asia a mission of doctors to study the extent of typhus and methods of combating it. They traveled throughout the Middle East, but when they applied for permission to visit the Soviet Union they were told there was no typhus in Russia and therefore there was no need for the mission to study there. The doctors repeated their request, and the second request brought a definite refusal, again on the ground that there was no typhus in Russia. There was typhus, of course, as every Russian knew. In fact, one of our doctors in Moscow, Dr. Fred Lang, a commander in the U. S. Navy, had typhus himself. Still the Russian government did not want doctors studying medical conditions in the country.

Stories like this one can be told endlessly. Perhaps they are the inevitable result of differences in character. Perhaps they stem from the Russian feeling during this period of the war that the war on their soil was their own war and that the Allies should concentrate their attention more on a second front in Europe.

They wanted the supplies. They needed them. But above all they wanted the second front. The general attitude seemed to be: Ship us the equipment and we will use it our own way; then open a second front and forget about everything else.

So it is easy to guess what a difficult time our representatives had in Moscow. Every day it seemed one of them would say: "If the Russians would only let us help them, we could help them more." But one important factor in all this is that most if not all of the difficulties came from our dealings with the government. Our men got along well with the Red Army which appreciated the help and wanted all it could get. Inevitably, however, most of our dealings were with political leaders. In Persia the American Army's Persian Gulf Command, which handled deliveries through the southern route, talked most of the time with the Red Army. Down there Major General Donald H. Connolly was able to get things done. He ran into plenty of problems but like our representatives in Moscow and Alaska he operated on the theory that his job was to get supplies to Russia any way he could and he would not allow anything to stand in his way. If the Russians insisted a thing be done in a certain way, he did it their way. And that was the only way to handle the situation. Otherwise the work would never have been done.

But it was done despite everything that happened. Every place you went in Russia you saw American transport, Dodge, Studebaker and Chevrolet trucks, jeeps made by Willys, sub-machine-guns made by Thompson of Bridgeport, Conn., light and medium tanks, field telephones, almost everything you can think of except artillery.

I saw our equipment during the Battle for Moscow and later after the Battle for Stalingrad. On most airfields I saw there were American planes of one type or another or British Hurricanes. In the hospitals were

American surgical supplies. In the warehouses of Leningrad was American food. There were soldiers wearing American and British boots and shoes. On a train one day I talked to a soldier from Leningrad who was smoking American cigarettes.

All the difficulties of transportation and all the political problems that arose were not enough to stop the flow of supplies. In the first year of deliveries Washington and London had shipped to Russia 3,052 planes, 4,084 tanks, 30,031 vehicles and 831,000 tons of miscellaneous supplies. I do not know how much of it reached the Red Army. Certainly some of the stuff was sunk on the way or damaged in transit, but American and British authorities said that the majority arrived safely. One thing worth remembering is that practically everything shipped went in American and British ships. The Russian transport fleet was not large, and for the most part it plied between Vladivostok in Siberia and the American west coast.

If there is any question as to just how much equipment is represented by 3,052 planes and 4,084 tanks, compare the figures with the losses which the Russians say the Germans suffered in the Battle for Moscow from November 16, 1941 to January 7, 1942, the fifty-two heaviest days of fighting — 1,136 planes and 2,901 tanks.

It is true that while we were sending these supplies, there was little mention of our aid in the Russian press. It is also true that the American correspondents in Moscow were often prevented by the censor from cabling to the American people the story of our help. The Russians wanted a second front and they believed that

if they praised our material aid the idea might grow up in America that material help would be sufficient and a second front unnecessary. That is why Stalin said in a letter to Henry Cassidy of the Associated Press: "As compared with the aid which the Soviet Union is giving to the Allies by drawing upon itself the main forces of the German Fascist armies, the aid of the Allies to the Soviet Union has so far been little effective."

Soon after the letter was published the American Ambassador in Moscow, Admiral William H. Standley, left for Washington. One of the purposes of his trip was to find out exactly how much equipment had been shipped to Russia and as near as possible how much of it had arrived. When he returned in January, he came back to Moscow convinced that our material aid to Russia had been large. He thought the American people should realize that the equipment they were sending was reaching Russia and that it was appreciated. He tried for four weeks to persuade a Russian spokesman to say so. None would, Foreign Minister Molotov included. Then one afternoon, about the time the entire question of lend-lease was coming up for review in Congress, he issued a statement saying that our equipment was arriving, that it was needed but that the Russian people had not been fully informed of the facts.

He wanted Washington to understand how much our help was needed because he knew it should be continued. He thought he might just as well tell the truth which was that the Russian people did not know the whole story, in the hope that his broadside might help to persuade the Russian government to inform its people. I guess the State Department did not feel his

statement very diplomatic because, naturally, it was bound to irritate some Russian officials. I know some of his diplomatic colleagues in Moscow thought his remarks might better have gone unsaid. But Standley was no politician. He was first of all an American, and he believed the truth never hurt anyone. The first results were spectacular. Standley was subjected to a sort of scolding at the Kremlin, but the next day the Russian press began to tell the story of Allied aid for the first time. And in the following week it told the story in two and three column stories every day. In Moscow we thought Standley's frankness had cleared the atmosphere and we saw repeated evidence of closer relations from then on.

CHAPTER 21

Russia and Japan

WHEN the Red Army first was called upon to defend the Soviet Union against German invasion — on that beautiful summer morning of June 22, 1941 — it turned to meet attack in the west but it kept a strong eye directed at the Japanese in the east. The world situation was still confused and none could tell for certain what would happen. The only things that a country and its army could bet on were that an international agreement with an aggressor nation was worth little or nothing and that the best defense against aggression was powerful military preparation. Moscow then could do nothing more than marshal the bulk of its forces against the German Army and keep a strong covering force to watch the Japanese. It passed through many uneasy moments in the early months of the war. By the time I arrived in the Soviet Union at the end of October the first question on Russian lips was: Are the Japanese going to attack us, and if they do will the United States come to our help?

But as the world soon found out the Japanese had a more ambitious plan than invasion of the Soviet Far East in conjunction with German invasion of the west. In December came Pearl Harbor, the Japanese invasion of the Philippines, Singapore, the subsequent invasion

of Java and New Guinea, the threat to Australia and New Zealand. From that time on I guess Moscow and the Red Army began to breathe more easily.

Events moved rapidly in those days. On December 11 the three Axis powers, Japan, Germany and Italy, agreed not only to wage war jointly to the finish but to cooperate closely after a successful termination of the war. Then on January 2 twenty-six nations, headed by the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union, pledged themselves to employ their full military and economic resources against those members of the Axis with which they were at war, to cooperate with each other and not to make a separate peace with the enemies. Now the final lines of battle were drawn between the Axis and the United Nations. The only curious fact was that Russia and Japan continued to maintain diplomatic relations. But this situation fitted in closely with the grand strategy of the United Nations which reasoned this way: Germany is the most dangerous enemy. Russia has the only great battle front with the German Army and everything should be done to help Russia defeat Germany in the field. Japan will be handled later.

The only move that could have upset this strategy was a Japanese attack on Russia in the Far East. It never came, partly because of Anglo-American strength in the Southwest Pacific and India, partly because of continued Chinese resistance to Japan and partly because of the small but strong army that Russia maintained in the Far East. Throughout this period Moscow was polite but tough in its relations with Japan. It asked no favors and it gave none. It hoped and tried to

avoid war on two fronts. But it did not grovel.

I said that Russians were uneasy in the early months of the war. I am sure they were. During that first winter, however, two things occurred that gave them heart. One was Pearl Harbor, and Japan at war with Great Britain and the United States. The other was the Red Army's successful counter-offensive that drove the Germans back from the gates of Moscow.

Listen to an article in Kuibeshev's "Volga Commune" on January 8: "Japan's temporary successes in the Far Eastern theatre of military operations are unavoidable because of Japan's unexpected attack on the Anglo-American line of communications. But following these, in the long and stubborn war which all indications promise for the Pacific Ocean, the Japanese will begin to suffer defeat after defeat and will lose the war." That was something new. Now the Russians were talking. A few days later I went to a press conference that took place in Kuibeshev. American and British correspondents had been to Moscow and the front in December. Now they were back in the temporary capital to get their baggage for a longer stay in Moscow.

"You will return to Moscow in a few days," said Solomon Lozovsky, the bearded spokesman for the Soviet Information Bureau.

"And the Japanese correspondents?" asked a thin little Jap. "We were not allowed to go in December. Why the Americans and the British, if the Japanese cannot go?"

"Moscow," said Lozovsky evenly, "is the front. The Americans and the British are our allies. Only allies can visit the front." He paused. "I suppose Japan's allies,

the German and the Italian correspondents, get better facilities on the Tokio front."

That one was almost below the belt and if the Japanese did not like it they could make the best of it. Now the Russians were arguing with the Japanese about the renewal of their fisheries agreement which had expired at the end of December. This was an old agreement according to which the Japanese had the right, for a price, to fish in Soviet waters off the Siberian coast. The Japs wanted to renew it for a period of five years and to lower the price. Finally on March 20 after much haggling they agreed to a renewal for only one year and to pay 20 per cent more than they had paid the year before. Furthermore, the number of fishing beds open to their fleet was reduced.

As the weeks wore on the Soviet government became tougher and tougher. A new British Ambassador, Sir Archibald Kerr-Clark-Kerr arrived from his former post in China. He was received almost immediately by Stalin at the Kremlin. A new American Ambassador, Admiral William H. Standley, arrived. He was received by Stalin. And then came a new Japanese Ambassador, Naotake Sato, to replace Lieutenant General Yoshitugu Tatekawa. But Stalin was too busy to see him.

They were hard days for Sato. He was given a quick trip to Moscow and a talk with Molotov, but while he was there he read the strongest-worded editorial that Russia had ever printed about Japan during the war. It came on April 13, the anniversary of the signing just a year before of the Soviet-Japanese pact of neutrality. "It is necessary," wrote Pravda, "that the Japanese military and fascist cliques whose heads have been

turned by military successes realize that their prattle about an annexationist war in the north may cause damage, in the first place and most of all to Japan herself." There was nothing weak about that editorial. It simply served notice on Tokio that it must mend its ways if it wanted to maintain peace with the Soviet Union. It was only a few days after this editorial appeared that an unpleasant situation developed. On April 18 came the American bombing of Tokio. One of the planes came down on Soviet territory near Kharbarovsk. Clearly by international law its crew had to be interned since Japan and Russia were not at war. But I know that the Russians made an attempt to overlook the incident and it was only when Moscow feared that the Japanese would hear the story that it finally announced publicly that the plane had come down and the fliers been interned. This is what happened.

Two days after the raid Lozovsky held a press conference in Kuibeshev. At that time he knew and the American Embassy knew that a plane had come down on Soviet soil. The correspondents did not know it.

But during the conference several American newspapermen, purely from curiosity, asked Lozovsky what would happen if an American bomber were to land in Siberia. There were Japanese newspapermen in the room.

"The question is ridiculous," Lozovsky snapped. "No plane has landed on our territory."

"I know," an American said, "but I would like to know what the procedure would be."

"I told you," said Lozovsky, "that no plane came down."

"Well," the American said, "I am just asking you a hypothetical question. Can't you give me a hypothetical answer?"

Lozovsky looked around the room. He saw the Japanese present. He began to wonder whether the American knew something or whether he was just asking a hypothetical question. Finally, he changed the subject. But Lozovsky and the Soviet Government came to the conclusion that same afternoon that the story might have leaked out. They considered the issue at stake too important. The result was that before nightfall Tass, the Soviet news agency, announced that the bomber had landed near Kharbarovsk and the crew interned. Many months later I was told by a man who should know the facts that before this announcement was made the Soviet Government not only had intended to release the plane and its crew but that it had already refueled the American plane so that it could continue its flight to China.

When I left Russia a year after this conference the five American fliers were still interned. First they were stationed in Penza southeast of Moscow but when Penza came close to being threatened by the German army in its march towards Stalingrad they were transferred to a small village on the banks of the Kama River in the Ural Mountains. They had the freedom of the village. They had their own house. They were given the only piano in the district. Several times American officials were permitted to visit them and take them newspapers, magazines, medicines and other supplies. The fliers did not like it out there, of course. They were lonely. They wanted to return home. But the Russians

were afraid that their release might precipitate real trouble with the Japanese. I don't know where these boys are today. Maybe they are in Russia. Maybe they have been allowed to return to America. I am sure of one thing, that as soon as the Soviet Government dares to release them they will be released. And the release may come very soon if it has not taken place already.

After the internment of the American fliers nothing much occurred in Soviet-Japanese relations for a while, but in the meantime the United States was building up a supply line to Russia by way of Alaska and Siberia. It was a difficult problem that required considerable diplomacy. The American Government moved fast and was in a position to give considerable help by way of Alaska long before the Russians dared to accept it. They were still tough in their own dealings with the Japanese but they were still afraid to do anything that the Japs might regard as an act of war.

During that summer, when the Russians were being pushed back towards Stalingrad, it was believed in some quarters that Japan would attack anyway. It was not moving in the Southwest Pacific. It was not moving against India. It was getting no place in China. And reports came in, most of them, I believe, from Chungking, that the Jap's Kwantung Army in Manchukuo was preparing to cross the Siberian frontier. About this time the United States sent to Moscow Major General Follett Bradley, of the United States Army Air Corps. The crew of his plane included several West Point graduates, all experts in their fields. I believe if Japan had attacked in the Far East that the Bradley mission would have facilitated American aid via Alaska. But

the attack never came, and the Russians sat tight.

Later on Wendell L. Willkie came to Russia. I think it is not generally known that one of the things he accomplished was to persuade Stalin to open up Siberia to American aid from Alaska. Until then Stalin had feared that plane deliveries by that route would be too much for the Japanese to accept.

Things then went on without incident until the end of that year, by which time the Russians were again on the offensive, this time west of Stalingrad; the Americans and the British were driving the Germans and Italians out of North Africa and the Americans and Australians were putting the pressure on the Japanese in the Southwest Pacific. From then on the Red Army worried little about a Japanese attack in the east.

It is impossible for any foreigner to discuss competently just what the Red Army had in the Far East during the first two years of the war. In Moscow we knew that the Siberian force was a large one, but we also knew that many of its divisions had been transferred to fight against the German army in the west. Nevertheless, it was organized for war. It had some of its own factories for the production of war materials. It grew some of its own food. Years before, in preparing its Five-Year Plans that industrialized the Soviet Union, the government worked to create in Siberia an industrial region that would come close to being self-sufficient. One of the objectives was to build factories that could supply the army in the Far East. Up went the industrial center of Magnitogorsk in a region of high-grade iron-ore deposits. It included blast furnaces, rolling mills and other steel plants, the whole connected

by rail with the Kuznetsk Basin in which are some of the largest coal deposits in the world. Vast power plants were constructed, copper smelters, chemical plants, automobile, tractor and machine tool factories. New oil-producing regions were developed. Most of this, however, was in western Siberia. Further to the east, in the area close to the frontier with Japanese-controlled Manchukuo, facilities were not available for enormous development. A few steel mills were established. Several oil refineries were built. But in this area the government improved its transportation system.

The result was that the Red Army in the Far East had a fair base of supplies although most of the armaments produced had to be shipped to supply the army fighting the Germans in the west. To meet a Japanese attack, if one were to come, the Soviet High Command organized the area into two commands. One it called the "Far-Eastern Front." Its commander was Army General Josef Apanasenko whose headquarters were in Kharbarovsk. Under his jurisdiction was the great port of Vladivostok, but Vladivostok was vulnerable to Japanese attack and difficult to defend. Kharbarovsk further to the north was a better base of operations. The other command in the area was the "Trans-Baikal Front," with headquarters at Chita, many miles west of Kharbarovsk. Each front had its own independent air force.

Apanasenko had the more difficult command. His army was farther from the industrial centers of the Urals and it guarded the eastern section of the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Furthermore, it controlled the air bases from which Japan, if it attacked the Soviet Union,

could be bombed. In the Red Army he was considered an excellent officer. He was a little fellow with a shaved head, nicknamed "Hercules," born at Platorskaya near the Don in 1890. He was not one of the "young generals." During the World War he had served in the Czar's Army first as a private then as a Corporal in a Cossack detachment. He like many other Red Army generals joined the revolutionaries in 1917. First he led a detachment of guerrilla fighters during the civil war; then he joined Budenny's First Cavalry Army, ultimately becoming the commander of a division. It has been said of Apanasenko that he alone has sabred two hundred men.

In recent years he has commanded in several military districts. Once he led his troops on maneuvers in the mountainous Pamirs between Russia, Afghanistan and India and soon after he wrote a book on the tactics of alpine warfare. In 1939 he wrote a pamphlet called "Crushing Flank and Rear Blows," based on the German campaign in Poland. Officers who have served under him consider him a hard commander. He is seldom at headquarters, constantly traveling about making surprise inspections, ruthless with incompetents or the lazy. For years he has been a member of the party and in 1941 he was elected a candidate member to the important Central Executive Committee. He is also a member of the Supreme Soviet. In November of 1942 General Apanasenko did a little sabre-rattling out in his area when he staged in Kharbarovsk on the anniversary of the revolution the largest military parade that has been held in Russia since the outbreak of the war. Before him passed trained troops with modern

weapons, tens of thousands of them. The Russians quietly allowed the Japanese to hear of the demonstration by publishing a short story of the mechanized equipment that took part in the parade. Under Apanasenko are officers and men who have fought the Japanese before. In fact wherever I went in Russia I seemed to run into someone who had fired against the Japs in the many border incidents that occurred before the German invasion. Some of them held high commands in the Red Army. Others were pilots, tank officers, infantrymen. Many men of the Red Army learned to fight against the Japanese.

It may be difficult for an American or other foreigner to understand how a Russian feels about a Jap, but history tells the story. The two countries have been enemies for fifty years.

In 1898 Czarist Russia took the Liaotung Peninsula from China, which gave it control of the warm-water Pacific port of Port Arthur on the Yellow Sea. Then on February 9, 1904, striking as suddenly and treacherously as they did at Pearl Harbor, the Japanese fleet attacked Port Arthur precipitating the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05 which ended in disaster for Russia. By the terms of the Treaty of Portsmouth, Japan not only took over Port Arthur but obtained a free hand in Korea and the southern half of the Russian island of Sakhalin. The next time the Russians clashed with the Japanese was after the revolution of 1917 when Japan, the United States and Great Britain occupied Vladivostok and other parts of the Russian Far East, in a move which the revolutionaries have always considered was directed against them. The Americans sent 9,000 troops

but withdrew them from Russian territory in the spring of 1920. The commander of the American force, General William S. Graves, later wrote in his book, "America's Siberian Adventure," that he never quite understood exactly what our intervention was for. In any event we withdrew in 1920. But the Japanese who had agreed to send only 7,000 troops into the area actually sent more than 72,000 and did not withdraw them until November of 1922. They stayed on, however, in the northern part of Sakhalin, the southern half of which they had obtained by the Treaty of Portsmouth.

But in 1925, partly because of American pressure and partly because of the British abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese alliance of 1902, Japan found itself in no position to harry the Russians in the Far East. Diplomatic relations were opened and the Japanese withdrew from the northern half of Sakhalin. After that relations were relatively normal, but the essential friction and hostility were always present, fanned by Russia's aid to China after the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931. From then on neither country trusted the other, each one believing that the other was out to become the major power in the Far East. Japan moved into Manchuria or Manchukuo as it is now called. It forced Russia to sell its interest in the vital Chinese Eastern Railway that ran from Chita across Manchukuo to Vladivostok. It sought to wield influence in Outer Mongolia. Russia for its part worked hard to develop its Far-Eastern resources. It built up its independent Red Banner armies. It patrolled its long frontier day and night. It insisted that Outer Mongolia was its sphere of

influence. It continued to sell armaments to China, now engaged in a war with Japan.

In the conflicts that followed there were countless brief but bloody border incidents. Some hit the world press. Others passed unnoticed. Finally, the situation was such that by 1938 the two countries were close to war, although neither wanted war at that time. In that year there was an important battle fought near Lake Khassan south of Vladivostok. In 1939 there was a great battle on the frontier of Outer Mongolia in which a number of divisions participated on both sides.

The Red Army learned a lot in these pitched battles. At the Khalkin-Gol battle in 1939 Marshal Zhukov commanded the Russian forces and he not only drove the Japanese Sixth Army from Outer Mongolian territory but he surrounded the force and destroyed it. Under him were many men of the Red Army who later fought in the west against the Germans. Russians know of these fights and they are deeply conscious of the conflict of interests between the two countries. While I was in Russia I failed to meet one soldier or civilian who did not hate the Japanese as Americans hated them in the months after Pearl Harbor. Still, in those first two years of the German invasion, the only ones I know anything about, the Russians did not want war with Japan. Japan was an enemy but the Soviet Union already had one powerful enemy to contend with and one at a time was enough. Fortunately Russian policy in regard to Japan was acceptable to America and Great Britain, which also regarded Germany as the greater danger and the country to be defeated first.

As the war goes on, questions will come up from time to time regarding Russian-Japanese relations. Will the Japanese at this late date, from fright or despair or bewilderment, attack in the Far East? If they do, they may be able to occupy Vladivostok and its neighboring territory, but my guess is the Red Army after an initial withdrawal will come back and come back swinging as it did before Moscow and Stalingrad. Or will the Russians join the United States, Great Britain and China in the final rout of the Japanese after Germany has been beaten to its knees? Russia has the bases for immediate attack on Japan. Japanese cities are within easy bombing range of the Soviet Far East.

My guess is that as soon as Russia has an opportunity to strengthen its Far-Eastern Army, which will come some time after the American and British armies have a foothold on the continent of Europe, Russia will be at war with Japan. Not in American or British interests, but in Russia's interest. The Soviet Union has old scores to settle, and the Red Army should be able to settle them.

Index

- Abganerovo, 207
 Aborin, Sergei, 165
 Adam, Col., 223
 Aircobras, 139, 231
 Alaska, 227, 243, 244
 Andreyev, Andrey A., 26
 Apanasenko, Gen. Josef, 80, 84, 245, 246, 247
 Archangel, 136, 180, 227, 229
 Artillery, 152

 Baiedek, Leonid, 169
 Balkans, 50
 Balta, 85
 Barabanovo, 74
 Barnaul, 201
 Barricades, 199, 205
 Basargino, 187
 "Bashlik," 80
 Batiuk, Gen. Nikolai M., 194
 Batov, 194
 Belgium, 21, 50
 Beloborodov, Maj. Gen. Afanasi M., 66
 Belov, Maj. Gen. Pavel, 31, 32, 36, 47, 48, 51, 73, 74, 75, 85, 86, 120
 Beria, Lavrenti P., 26
 Berliu, 138
 Bialystok, 96
 Bichkov, Valentin, 159
 Bielastok, 117
 Bogdanov, Col. Semeon, 69
 Boldin, Gen., 34, 36, 46, 47, 48, 49, 51, 68, 72, 74, 75, 76, 96
 Bolsheviki, 80, 84, 143
 Bolvinov, 194
 Borodino, 71, 72, 89, 97
 Borovsk, 35, 69
 Bradley, Maj. Gen. Follett, 243
 British, 21, 50
 Buckingham Palace, 136
 Budenny, Semeon M., 19, 27, 28, 80, 84, 246
 "Burkas," 13, 80
 Byelgorod, 183

 Caspian Sea, 205
 Cassidy, Henry, 87, 89, 235
 Caucasus, 80, 119, 120, 125, 183, 184
 Cavalry, 82
 CHAIKA, 132
 Chamov, 202, 203
 Cherblennaya, 218, 219
 Chervlianoi River, 187
 Chiang Kai Shek, 194
 China, 242, 243, 249
 Chistiakov, Maj. Gen. Ivan, 60, 61, 213
 Chita, 245, 248
 Chuikov, Lt. Gen. Vasili, 184, 189, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 200, 201, 203, 212, 213, 219
 Chung-King, 243
 Commissars, 143, 144, 147
 Communist Party, 18, 19, 25, 142, 143, 147, 165, 177, 193
 Condor Legion, 136
 Connolly, Maj. Gen. Donald H., 233
 Cossacks, 79, 80, 81, 82, 91, 246

- Crimea, 184
 Curtiss P-40, 139
 Czechoslovakia, 130

 de Cauliancourt, Gen., quoted, 72
 Degtyarev, Maj. Gen. Georgi, 44, 99
 de Segur, quoted, 141
 Dmitrov, 46, 53, 54, 55
 Dneiper, 22
 Don, River, 20, 29, 79, 81, 183, 184, 186, 187, 205, 207, 212, 213
 Dorogobruzh, 76
 Dovator, Maj. Gen. Lev, 34, 51, 58, 59, 64, 66, 67, 68, 72, 85, 86, 87, 91
 Dubois, Lt. Gen., 223
 Dunkirk, 50

 Egypt, 50
 Elshanka, 195
 Epifan, 73
 Eremenko, Col. Gen. Andrei, 84, 189, 192, 200, 212
 Erzovka, 187

 Faymonville, Brig. Gen., 154
 Finland, 229
 Finnish Army, 97, 110, 111, 136, 142, 144, 154, 155, 156, 194
 Focke-Wulf-189, 134
 Focke-Wulf-190-A-3, 133, 138
 Focke-Wulfs, 136
 Franco, 136
 Frunze Military Academy, 19, 87

 Galitsino, 37
 Garand Rifle, 99
 Gaziri, 80
 Geneva Convention, 141
 German Prisoners, 16, 152, 153
 Gilmore, Eddy, 22, 23
 Golikov, Col. Gen. Filip, 12, 19, 29, 34, 49, 51, 73, 209
 Gorishni, Maj. Gen. Vasali, 194

 Gorky, 60
 Gorodovikov, Col. Gen. Oka, 84, 194
 Govorov, Col. Gen. Leonid, 29, 33, 34, 37, 38, 43, 44, 45, 46, 49, 51, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 76, 107
 Graves, Gen. William S., 248
 Grossman, Vasili, 203
 "Guards," 103
 Guderian, Gen. Heinz, 31, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 51, 73, 74, 75, 136
 Guerrillas, 19, 50, 159, 162, 164, 165, 166, 168, 171
 Guriev, Maj. Gen. Stepan, 194, 196, 198
 Gurtiev, 194, 199, 201, 202, 203, 204
 Gzhatsk, 42, 72, 76

 Hango Peninsula, 88
 HE-113, 133
 Heinkel-111, 133, 136
 Helsinki, 110
 Hero of the Soviet Union, 87
 Hitler, Adolf, 10, 12, 17, 36, 42, 50, 96, 117, 118, 119, 120, 136, 150, 213, 224
 Holland, 50
 Holt, Paul, 23, 222
 Huepner, 45
 Hurricanes, 139

 Ikva, River, 86
 IL, 132
 IL-2, 133
 IL-4, 133
 Ilyushin, Maj. Gen. Sergei, 133
 Indian Ocean, 21
 Iran, 227
 Irkutsk, 22
 Irvin, Warren, 110, 111
 Istra, 46, 51, 66
 Ivashova, Feona, 162
 Izium-Barvenkovo, 182

- Japan, 80, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 247, 248, 249, 250
Japanese Army, 28
JU-87, 134
JU-88, 134
Junkers, 136
- Kaganovich, Lazar M., 26
Kalach, 186, 206, 207
Kalinin, 41, 42, 43, 46, 77
Kalinin, Mikail I., 26
Kalmuk, 211
Kaluga, 42, 68, 72, 76
Kama, River, 242
Kantemirovka, 209
Karelian Isthmus, 194
Karpovka, 207
"Kasha," 8
Kashira, 31, 47, 48, 73
Kastrovo, 48
Katukov, Maj. Gen. Mikhail, 64
"Katusha," or "Kostikov's Gun," 114
Katushi, 60
Kerr-Clark-Kerr, Sir Archibald, 240
Khalkin-Gol, 28, 249
Kharbarovsk, 241, 242, 245, 246
Kharkov, 12, 30, 119, 120, 133, 137, 146, 164, 182, 183, 209
Khassan, Lake, 249
Khimki, 37, 46
Khotino, 86
Khrushchev, Nikitin S., 26, 27
Kiev, 95
Kirichenko, Maj. Gen. Nikolai, 88
Kirov Plant, 121
Kittyhawks, 139
Kletskaya, 205, 207
Klin, 46, 53, 56, 58, 61, 169
Koivo, 60
Kolchak, Admiral, 22, 193
Kolodeznaye, 75
Konstantinovich, Semeon, 27
Korea, 247
- Korol, Maj. Gen. Fedor, 62, 63, 64
Kostikov, Andre, 114
Kotelkov, Maj. Gen. Peter, 212
Kotelnikovo, 16, 17, 55, 120, 163, 186, 208, 209, 211, 212, 216, 217
Kovalev, Gen. Gregorgi, 84
Kovno-Vilna, 117
Krasnaya Polyana, 46, 59, 60
Krasnoyarsk, 201
Kravchenko, Maj. Gen. Andei, 60, 61
Kremlin, 27, 36, 177, 236, 240
Kruchenkin, Maj. Gen. V. D., 86, 88
Krukov, Maj. Gen. Vladimir, 87, 88
Krukovo, 65
Krylov, Col. Nikolai, 195
Kuban, 79
Kubinka, 37, 67, 68
Kuibeshev, 180, 239, 241
Kulik, Gregory, 27
Kupiansk, 183, 184
Kursk, 183
Kushnarriev, Major, 203, 204
Kuznetsk. Basin, 245
Kuznetsov, Lt. Gen. Vasili, 33, 36, 43, 46, 49, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 61, 65, 71, 76
- LA-5, 133
LAGG, 132, 133, 138
LaGuardia Field, 132
Lang, Dr. Fred, 232
Lavachkin, S. A., 133
Lelushenko, Lt. Gen. Dmitri, 33, 36, 46, 49, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 65, 76, 84
Lenin, 5, 22, 103, 143
Leningrad, 15, 34, 46, 51, 58, 59, 61, 67, 77, 78, 87, 95, 109, 118, 120, 121, 154, 173, 213, 234
Lesueur, Larry, 89
Lightnings, 139

- Lindbergh, Charles A., 130
 Lizukov, Maj. Gen. Alexander, 60, 61
 Lotoshino, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 165, 166, 168
 Lozovsky, Solomon, 239, 241, 242
 Ludnikov, Maj. Gen. Ivan, 194
 Ludwig, Colonel, 225
 Luftwaffe, 133, 134, 137
 Lugavaya, 60
 Lybia, 50

 Magidoff, Robert, 23
 Magnitogorsk, 244
 Malenkov, G. M., 27
 Maleyer, 157
 Malinin, Lt. Gen. Mikhail, 64
 Malinovsky, Lt. Gen. Rodion, 17, 20, 21, 22, 25, 85, 208, 209, 212, 213
 Malo-Yaraslavetz, 40, 42, 67, 68, 69, 169
 Mamai Kurgan, 189, 190, 198, 201
 Manchukuo, 28, 84, 243, 245, 248
 Mankelov, 202
 Mannerheim Line, 70, 110, 194
 Marinovka, 207
 Marshals, 27
 Maslovo, 75
 McClellan's Army, 83
 ME-109, 133
 ME-109-F, 133
 ME-109-G, 133
 ME-110, 133
 Mediterranean, 21
 Messerschmitt-109-G, 137
 MIG, 132, 133, 138
 MIG-3, 132, 133
 Mikhailov, Colonel, 202, 203
 Mikhailovskoye, 69, 73
 Mikoyan, Anastas I., 26
 Millerovo, 184
 Minsk, 11, 35, 86, 96, 117
 Mishkov, River, 186, 187

 Moelders, Werner, 136
 Molevo, Colonel, 57
 Molotov, Viacheslav M., 25, 235, 240
 Mongolia, 28
 Mordves, 74
 Moscow, Battle for, 4, 87, 95, 126, 233, 234
 Moshkovo, 169
 Mossin-Nagent, 99
 Mozdok, 120
 Mozhaish, 11, 33, 37, 42, 43, 67, 69, 70, 71, 72, 107, 152, 169
 Munich, 130
 Murmansk, 136, 227, 228, 229, 230

 Nagornaye, 53
 Napoleon, 71, 72, 97, 141
 Nari, River, 46
 Naro-Fominsk, 46, 68
 Nazi Party, 12, 168
 Nazi War Machine, 14, 157
 Nekolskaye, 64
 New Jerusalem, 66
 NKVD, 114
 North Africa, 21
 Norway, 50, 136, 229
 Novikov, 30, 132
 Novosibirsk, 201

 Obukov, Maj. Gen. Viktor, 84, 85, 86
 Odessa, 22, 95, 195
 Omsk, 201
 Order of the Red Banner, 87
 Orekhovo-Zeovo, 45
 Otishkhovsky, 170
 Outer Mongolia, 248, 249

 Palace of the Soviets, 178
 Palashkino, 87
 Palgunov, 188
 Partisans, 19, 50, 159, 166, 168, 169
 Paveltsevo, 53, 54

- PE-2, 132
PE-3, 132
Pearl Harbor, 247, 249
Penza, 242
People's Commissariat of Defense, 146, 155
Persian Gulf, 237
Peskovatskaya, Tatiana, 162
Peter the Great, 102
Petrovskoye, 53
Piatnitsa, 74
Pitomnik, 217
Ploesti Oil Fields, 138
Podolsk, 40
Poland, 28, 97, 193
Political Bureau, 25
Polosukhin, Colonel Leonid, 38
Port Arthur, 247
Pozharsky, Colonel Nikolai, 196
Prague, 130
"Pravda," 240

Raske, Major General, 224, 225, 226
Red Air Force, 30
Red Guards, 18, 19
"Red Star," 9
Reds, 81
Reviakino, 48, 75
Riga, 51, 157
Rinok, 187, 195
Rinoldi, Lt. Gen. Otto, 223
Rodimtsev, Maj. Gen. Alexander, 189, 190, 194, 196, 198, 199
Rodin, Maj. Gen. Alexi G., 206
Rogachov, 54, 55
Rokossovsky, Col. Gen. Konstantin, 19, 29, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 46, 49, 51, 58, 59, 61, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 72, 76, 87, 91, 104, 109, 212, 213, 214, 216, 218, 219
Roslavl, 40, 41
Rossochka, River, 187, 218
Rossosh, 184
Rostov, 78, 183

Rotmistrov, Maj. Gen. Pavel, 55, 56, 209
Rudniov, 48, 75
Rumania Prisoners, 16
Russian Pilots, 131
Ryazan, 73
Rzhev, 12, 42, 76, 120

"Sakhalin," 247, 248
Salsk, 217
Saratov, 209, 210
Sarayev, 194
Sato, 240
Schlemmer, Lt. Gen. Helmuth, 224, 225
Schmidt, General, 223
Serafimovich, 205, 206
Serpukhov, 46
Sevastopol, 95, 113, 184, 195
Shapkovo, 157, 160
Shaposhnikov, Marshal Boris M., 27, 30, 65
Shchadenko, Col. Gen. E. A., 84
Shcherbakov, Alexander S., 27, 135
Sholokovi, Mikhail, 81
Shumilov, Lt. Gen. Mikhail, 213
Shumova, Evdiko, 170
Shvernik, Nikolai M., 26
Siberia, 16, 21, 28, 36, 45, 100, 193, 221, 243, 244, 245
Simonov, Konstantin, quoted, 94
Singapore, 21
Sixth Army, German, 34
Siyazov, Colonel M. A., 46, 47, 48
Skachov, Ivan, 169
Skvortsov, Maj. Gen. Alexander, 194
Smolensk, 11, 31, 35, 36, 40, 42, 66, 67, 69, 71, 76, 117, 134
Sokolov, Maj. Gen. Sergei, 88
Soldan, Colonel, 96, 97
Solnechnogorsk, 61, 62, 169
Soloviev, Ivan, 166

- Soviet Union, 6, 10, 15, 19, 102, 144, 150, 174, 237
 Spas-Demensk, 40, 41
 Spitfires, 139
 Stalin, 5, 10, 11, 18, 22, 28, 29, 30, 32, 42, 65, 102, 144, 145, 158, 192, 240, 244
 Stalingrad, 50, 56, 60, 65, 77, 94, 95, 104, 105, 119, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 136, 137, 183, 184, 186, 187, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 243, 244, 250
 Stalingrad, Battle for, 4, 132, 146, 182, 188, 189, 191, 192, 193, 195, 200, 201, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 217, 218, 219, 221, 223, 226, 233
 Stalinogorsk, 47, 74
 Standley, Admiral William H., 235, 236, 240
 Stepovka, 85
 "Stormovik, the IL," 133
 Stowe, Leland, 155
 Straus, General, 43
 Stuart, General J. E. B., 83
 Sudeten Crisis, 130
 Sukhinichi, 76
 Sulzberger, C. L., 62
 Suomussalmi, 142
 Suvorov, Alexander, quoted

 Tabunov, Boris, 169, 170
 Tannenberg, 96, 97
 Tashkent, 147
 Tatekama, 240
 Tatsinskaya, 217
 Thompson, Lt. Col. Paul, 96
 Thompson Sub-Machine Gun, 99, 233
 Thunderbolts, 139
 Tieplov, 75
 Tikhonov, Lt. Gen. Viktor, 111, 112
 Tikhvin, 77, 88
 Timoshenko, 19, 27, 28, 29, 31, 42, 84, 155, 182, 183, 184, 187, 192, 226
 Tomahawks, 139
 Torkhovo, 75
 Trans-Baikal, 245
 Trotskyites, 143
 Tsaritsyn, 193
 Tsimlanskaya, 186
 Tula, 31, 42, 43, 46, 48, 49, 51, 72, 75, 76, 193
 Tulenev, General Ivan, 84
 Tunisia, 50, 225
 Tupitsin, Ivan, 157, 158, 159
 Turovo, 159

 U-2, 132
 Ukhov, 40, 41, 47
 Ukrainian, 164
 "Unknown Quantity," 130
 Urals, 36, 44, 100, 121
 Uvarovo, 72

 Vasilievsky, Alexander, 30
 Vatutin, Col. Gen. Nikolai, 209
 Veniev, 47, 74
 Vertyachi, 186, 187
 Viipuri, 110
 Visokovsky, 167
 Vladivostok, 234, 245, 247, 248, 249, 250
 Vlasov, Maj. Gen. A. A., 33, 36, 43, 46, 49, 51, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65
 Volga, 36, 42, 119, 125, 184, 187, 189, 191, 193, 195, 196, 199, 201, 202, 205, 209, 210, 211
 Volokolomsk, 42, 43, 46, 58, 59, 64, 66, 67, 70, 167
 von Arnim, Lt. Gen. Sixt, 225
 von Bock, Field Marshal Fedor, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 61, 76, 182, 183, 184, 186, 187, 188, 212
 von Daniels, Lt. Gen. Adler, 223, 224
 von Drebber, Major General, 224

- von Hoth, General Herman, 45
von Kleist, Col. Gen. Paul, 22, 23
von Kluge, Field Marshal Gunther, 40, 41, 42, 45, 46, 47, 48, 76
von Manstein, Field Marshal Fritz, 208, 209
von Paulus, Col. Gen. Friedrich, 192, 194, 195, 196, 199, 200, 207, 208, 213, 219, 221, 222, 223, 224
Voronezh, 12, 34, 60, 120, 183, 209
Voronov, Nikolai, 30, 105, 109, 110, 111, 213, 214, 216
Voroshilov, Klimenti E., 19, 25, 26, 27, 84, 127, 155
"Voted with their Feet," 19
Voznesensky, Nikolai A., 27
Vyasma, 41, 42, 72
Wagner, Helmuth, 136
Wellerz, Helmuth, 136
Westminster Abbey, 136
"White Collar Workers," 177
"Whites," 19, 22, 81
Willkie, Wendell, 33, 244
Yachroma, 40
YAK, 132, 133
Yakovlev, Alexander, 133
Yaroslavskaya, 87
Yartsevo, 40
Zhdanov, A. A., 26, 27
Zholudev, 194, 199
Zhukov, Army General Georgi, 11, 19, 20, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 42, 44, 45, 48, 50, 51, 60, 67, 68, 72, 74, 76, 84, 192, 193, 200, 201, 205, 206, 209, 213, 249
Zimovniki, 217

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